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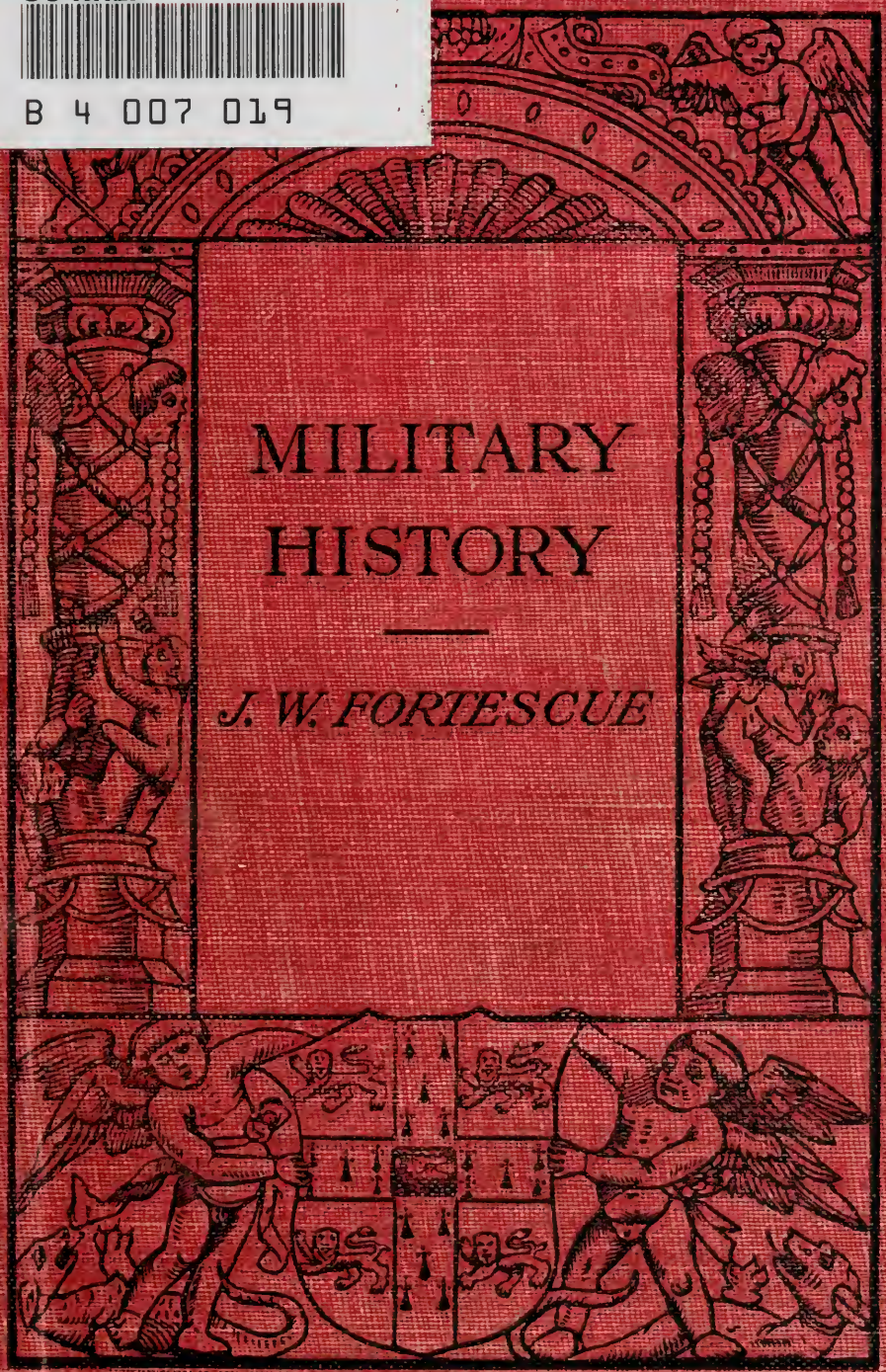
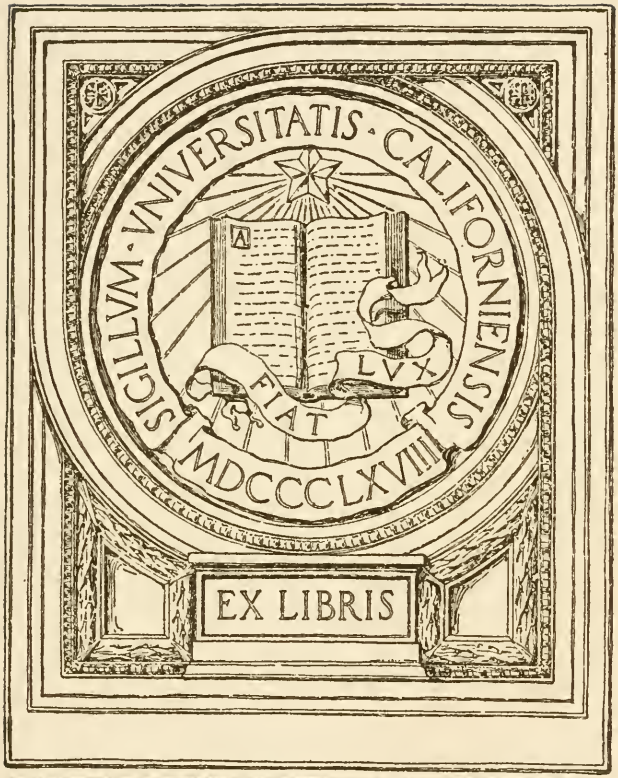


MILITARY HISTORY

J. W. FORTESCUE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MILITARY HISTORY

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MILITARY HISTORY

LECTURES DELIVERED AT
TRINITY COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE

BY

The Hon. J. W. FORTESCUE

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PREFACE

THERE is little in these lectures, or at any rate in three out of four of them, which I have not written at greater length in other volumes. I therefore publish them unwillingly, and in deference only to the wishes of some of my audience, whose good opinion I greatly value, and whose kindly sympathy I shall never forget. If this little volume should set but one student thinking seriously as to the meaning of military history, its object will be fully accomplished.

The spelling of Indian names has been, as usual, a stumbling-block. No doubt I shall be asked why I have used the form *Narbada* for the more familiar *Nerbuddha*, and yet written *Hyder Ali* instead of *Haidar Ali*. I can only say that when the form *Kalkáta* (or whatever may be the Hunterian spelling) is substituted for *Calcutta*, I shall be prepared to plead guilty to inconsistency.

J. W. F.

March 1914.

CONTENTS

LECT.		PAGE
	PREFACE	v
I.	MILITARY HISTORY: ITS SCOPE AND DEFINITION	1
II.	BRITISH MILITARY HISTORY	46
III.	BRITISH COLONIAL CAMPAIGNS	99
IV.	BRITISH CAMPAIGNS IN INDIA	150
	INDEX	201

LECTURE I

MILITARY HISTORY: ITS SCOPE AND DEFINITION

When in the spring of the year 1913 my old College did me the honour to appoint me its first lecturer in Military History, I was obliged for the first time to ask myself seriously, What is military history? I confess that I have found it very difficult to furnish a satisfactory answer. Some would reply with a light heart that military history is the history of wars and warring. But what, in its turn, is war? It has been defined as an instrument of policy for the imposition of the will of one community upon another by force of arms. The definition is not a bad one. But *force of arms* is a very vague term, and must not be taken necessarily to imply an *armed force* in the ordinary acceptation of the words. You will remember that after the French fleet had been swept by us from the seas in 1805, Napoleon, unable to attack England by any other means, decreed the exclusion of British manufactures from the Continent, and endeavoured to ruin her by shutting her out of her markets. This he was able to do

because his previous conquests had placed the control of many of the principal ports on the Continent in his hands. But though he strove thus to inflict his will upon England by might of arms, the armed men necessary for enforcing it were nothing more formidable than a small body of Custom-house officers. No doubt these functionaries, or some of them, carried weapons and in case of need were prepared to use them; but they cannot be considered as a military body. None the less as an act of war the Continental System was a bitter and deadly stroke, which nearly proved successful.

Is the history of the Continental System, therefore, military history? So far as concerns the invasion of Spain, Portugal and Russia to coerce those countries into the acceptance of it, undoubtedly it is. But as regards England, the power at which it was really aimed, what are we to say of it? How did we endeavour to combat it? How does any country invariably combat the commercial restrictions of any other? First by imposing retaliatory restrictions of her own, or engaging in a war of blockades or tariffs, which may be called regular commercial warfare; secondly, by the practice of smuggling, which may be called irregular commercial warfare. Is the history of a war of tariffs, then, military history? If we answer in the affirmative there is no escape from the logical conclusion that the never-

ceasing contest between smugglers and revenue-officers in all countries is military history. Moreover, since revenue-officers are only departmental police, it follows that the external struggle between the breakers and the upholders of the law at large—between criminals and the police—is also military history. But this is to say that the history of social communities generally is military history; and I cannot think this to have been in the mind of the generous founder of the lecturership which I have the honour to hold.

But can we then lay down the general proposition that the breach—the forcible breach—of commercial regulations is not military history? I do not think we can, if we bear in mind how Spain, in virtue of a Papal bull, excluded all other nations from commerce with the new world, and how successive Englishmen for many generations insisted upon flouting her. Nor can we say that in many cases the conflict between supporters and breakers of the law is not military history. It is merely a question of degree. A fight between three drunken men and the police is a scuffle. A fight between three hundred men and the police is a riot. A fight between three hundred thousand and the police is civil war; and we cannot exclude civil war from military history, for it would mean the sacrifice, among the English-speaking race alone, of the campaigns of Cromwell,

George Washington and Robert Lee. Altogether I think that we must abandon the attempt to define military history as the history of wars and warring. I feel tempted to ask in despair not "What is military history?" but rather "What is *not* military history?" since all history is but the record of the strife of men for the subsistence of their bodies or the prevalence of their opinions. But we must be patient for yet a little while, and try once more.

Let us begin, then, by laying it down provisionally that military history is the history of the strife of communities. This is not enough; for communities have been known before now to fight with anathemas, and such a conflict belongs rather to the domain of religious than of military history. Shall we say then that it is the history of the strife of communities for self-preservation or expansion? This is open to the obvious criticism that communities have fought and will fight again for many other objects than the two above-mentioned—for a woman, for a creed, for a principle moral or political, or even for nothing at all but from sheer force of habit. So it will be wiser for us to avoid any specification of the objects of strife, or we may find ourselves in trouble. It may be true in a sense to say that a tantrum of Madame de Pompadour cost the French their empire in North America and in India; but it is not the whole truth, nor nearly the whole truth. Even the best and

greatest of historians are but gropers in a thick darkness, and epigrams are the most deceitful of will-o'-the-wisps.

Let us now, as we needs must, strengthen our definition a little, and say that military history is the history of the strife of communities expressed through the conflict of organised bands of armed men. I am obliged to say *bands* of armed men so as to exclude such a case as a duel between two or more chosen champions of quarrelling communities; and I add the word *organised* so as to indicate that, below a certain stage of civilisation, there can be no military history. This is a second definition, but still imperfect; and I am afraid that I cannot yet improve it. It leaves a vast field for the survey of a lecturer, far vaster than I have the knowledge to cover; and, if Trinity should endure for another ten centuries, my successors will never want material for interesting and instructive lectures. And let no man persuade you that the subject is trivial or unimportant—that the study of war is the study of a relic of barbarism to be eschewed by the serious, the devout and the humane. I am not denying that war is a terrible—from some points of view even a hideous—thing. Since its object is to compel a number of people to do what they do not wish, by making their lives a burden to them, it must sometimes be a hideous thing. But, after all, the system

of forcing people to observe a certain line of conduct under penalties is that upon which all human society is founded. We are all subject to it at this moment, and have been from the beginning of our lives. You remember the mother in *Punch*— "Go and see what baby is doing, and tell her she mustn't." "Thou shalt not" is the basis of four-fifths of the ancient code of law which is most familiar to us, and of all other codes since. But in every community there are a certain number of individuals who answer "Thou shalt not" with a resolute "I will"; and these we ostracise, or imprison, or hang. We call such people lunatics or criminals, accordingly as we consider them responsible or not responsible for their actions, and we treat them as we think that they deserve; but, if by chance their opinions should later prevail even for a time, we proclaim them apostles or martyrs. There is, in fact, always the danger that, when we think ourselves to be merely punishing a criminal, we may really be torturing a great reformer. Hence a certain proportion of folks among us shrink from this system of coercion, and would have no government at all. Others again, looking upon the existence of private property as the main reason for the existence of the policeman, would have communities share all things in common. I mention these facts to show you

that the employment of force receives from some thinkers equal condemnation, whether to impose the will of a community upon its own citizens, or upon those of some other community.

But no one on that account has ventured to stigmatize the study of penal codes, and of the organisation for putting them into force, as ignoble or unprofitable. The sheriff, for instance, and his functions are approached with respect, by some historians even with awe. "Ah," say the despisers of military history, "but the sheriff is an instrument for compelling obedience to the law, not the leader of a host whose business it is to slaughter and destroy." The law! and what is the law but the formulated will which some section of the community, possibly a majority, but always in former days and frequently, even at present, a minority, seeks to impose upon the whole? And if breakers of the law resist the sheriff or policeman, will he not if necessary slaughter them, and destroy any shelter in which they may have taken refuge? Of course he will, and "the law" will uphold him for so doing. "But," reply the objectors, "you forget that civil law is not always a mere ordinance of man; it may have the sanction of divine authority." I speak here with all reverence, but how many are the armies and the leaders that have claimed that theirs was the cause of God,

and have fared forth to war in His name ? I am not speaking now of modern armies, though they too invariably invoke the help of the God of Battles, and call him to witness that their cause is just. Look at the Crusades on one side, look on the other at the mighty and overwhelming conquests of Islam. Look at the extinction of Christianity in North Africa ; look at the eight centuries of conflict which banished the Mohammedan faith from Spain. Look at the religious wars of Christians in Europe ; and not least at our own Puritans. Look finally at the bitter struggles of Hindu and Mohammedan in India. There was not one of these parties that did not claim, that did not for the most part heartily believe, that it was fighting to uphold the law of God.

No ! in its essence there is no difference between the force that imposes the will of a man upon his neighbour, and that which imposes his will upon his enemy. In the more primitive days of England the duties of the sheriff and his *posse comitatus* extended to foreign enemies on English soil as well as to domestic law-breakers. Do we not to this day speak of those guilty of acts of violence as *breakers of the King's Peace* ; men, that is, who seek to bring about a state of war and must be suppressed by the methods of war—taken prisoners, wounded or unwounded, and in the last resort killed ? What was

the origin of our own standing army? It was formed, as you doubtless know, out of a remnant of the victorious army of the Parliament which had overthrown the monarchy, a remnant which was saved from disbandment in order to overawe the turbulent of London, or in other words to serve as a body of police. It continued to be the only efficient instrument for imposing the will of the Government upon the people until 1829, when the present police-force was established. And the police are a standing army, neither more or less. The only essential difference between police and soldiers is that the former are employed mainly in the coercion of subjects of the State which levies them, while the function of the latter is to coerce the subjects of foreign states. It would not be inaccurate to say that police are soldiers against domestic enemies, and an army police against foreign enemies.

And now observe that we have found a second definition of military history. It is the history of the external police of communities and nations. But external police, you may object, implies the existence of something which, for want of a better word, we must call external law. Is there such a thing as external law? There is a thing called the law of nations or international law, which is concerned chiefly, though not exclusively, with the

relations between belligerents and neutrals, but which is simply custom, and should not be called law, because there is no international police to enforce it. Any nation may defy it, if she thinks it worth while, and a great many have defied it in the past and will defy it in the future, not necessarily with any damage to themselves. The same may be said of the International Tribunal of Arbitration at the Hague. Its decrees and decisions may be excellent, and nations may bind themselves beforehand to accept them ; but nations are not remarkable for the observance of inconvenient agreements, where there is no penalty for violating them. It is a painful fact, but in its relations to its neighbours every community is a law unto itself, the nature of that law being principally determined by the community's powers of enforcement. Police first, law afterwards, is the rule between nation and nation—a formula which may be rendered more tersely still by the phrase, Might is Right. In a sense, therefore, though not in the sense generally attached to the words, military history is the history of the law of nations, which is the law of force ; or, if you prefer it, of the law of force which is the law of nations.

A revolting thought, perhaps some of you will say ! Have all the efforts of countless generations of good and holy men to seek peace and ensue it, resulted in no greater success than this ? Let us

have the courage to face facts and answer boldly, Yes ; for be very sure that no piety of aspiration can dignify nor excuse the moral cowardice that seeks to evade them. You know that late in the 17th century a company of worthy and excellent men formed the settlement of Pennsylvania in North America. They were members of the Society of Friends, who would have nothing to do with war, and consequently bought their lands from the Indians instead of taking them by force or fraud. Frugal, thrifty and industrious, they soon grew wealthy, and extended their borders further and further, until they came into collision with other tribes of Indians, who one day fell upon the outlying settlers with fire and sword. In utter dismay the sufferers appealed to the Government of the province for protection ; but the Colonial Assembly would not do violence to their tenets and ignored the appeal, leaving their unhappy and inoffensive frontiersmen to be massacred. At length, goaded to desperation, the settlers came down to Philadelphia with their arms in their hands, and threatened violence unless the Assembly voted money, for supply of ammunition, and other measures of defence forthwith. Thereupon the Assembly yielded, but still they would not openly pass a vote for the purchase of gunpowder. To save their conscience they voted money only for the purchase

of corn or *other grain*, which, as gunpowder is made up of grains, was sufficient warrant for the acquisition of the necessary but unspeakable article. To such contemptible subterfuge are men driven who refuse to face facts. I understand the feelings of those who deplore that the government of human society should rest ultimately upon force, but I have no patience with those who pretend that it does not. It can profit no man to be obliged so to shape the actions of his life that they may square with a fundamental lie.

Accepting then the fact—for such I believe it to be—that the law of nations is the law of force, let us waste no time in lamentations. In the first place they are useless ; and in the second they seem to me highly presumptuous ; for what are we, or what is our knowledge, that we should aspire to correct the course of this world's governance ? Let us rather consider what is meant by the word *force*, as an element in the conflict of communities. Force, in the human creature, is of two kinds, moral and physical ; and in war, as Napoleon himself said, the moral is to the physical as four to one. What is this moral force ? It is an indefinable consciousness of superiority. And whence does it arise ? I must summon a poet to help me with my answer.

> "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

Self-reverence, which can be based only upon high aspirations and high ideals; self-knowledge, which combines the courage to face facts, the patience to accept them, the constancy to turn them to good account; self-control, the offspring of self-denial and self-discipline. We are too much inclined to think of war as a matter of combats, demanding above all things physical courage. It is really a matter of fasting and thirsting; of toiling and waking; of lacking and enduring; which demands above all things moral courage. Yet let us hasten to add that, without bodily soundness and strength to resist privation, hardship and fatigue, an army is naught. And here we strike the peculiarity which makes war the true touch-stone of nations. It is the supreme test of their merits and demerits both moral and physical. By a community's art, literature, science and philosophy you may take the measure of its intellectual attainments; through its administrative institutions and laws you may form some judgment of its political intelligence; from the bodily structure and condition of its citizens you may form conclusions as to its physical fitness; but of the general soundness of the body politic, of the capacity of its leaders, of the devotion of their followers, of the moral force which inspires all ages and both sexes to endure hardship and sorrow with cheerfulness, and to meet adversity

with confidence unshaken and with courage undaunted—for all this the trial of all trials is war.

Military history is the history of these trials. Does it seem to you a small, or ignoble, or unprofitable thing? But, it may be objected, this is an unfair way of putting the matter. No doubt it may be profitable to compare the political institutions of some effete community with those of the young, virile and vigorous communities which swept it out of existence. But the details of fire and sword, of massacre and devastation, of the blood of men and the tears of women, are they profitable? And the elaborate principles of strategy and tactics—that is to say the bringing of the armed force up to the field of decision, and the handling of it to the best advantage when there; with their ancillary sciences of fortification and poliorketics, that is to say, of setting up strong places and knocking them down again—are they profitable? What are the art of war and the science of military organisation but the art and science of destruction? Can the study of these be profitable?

Let us clear our minds of cant. What is the economy of this world, so far as we have eyes to see and intellects to understand it, but destruction and renewal, destruction and renewal? And it is really impossible, except by our petty human standards, to distinguish the one from the other. I have seen

—and perhaps some of you may have seen the like—what we call a desert, of a thousand square miles of pumice-stone. This pumice-stone is a layer which varies from six to fifteen feet in depth ; and below it lie the trunks of gigantic trees, all black and charred, which were scathed and overthrown by the same terrific volcanic explosion which afterwards buried them in pumice. The soil must have been fertile to raise such trees ; and men lament the destruction which has made so large an area into a waste. But what they mean by *destruction* and *waste* is simply the change which has rendered it useless, so far as they can see, for purposes of producing food and exchangeable commodities immediately to the profit of *men*—that and nothing more. Whether it be destruction or renewal in the scheme of nature we cannot tell. But let us pass to the works of man, the great destroyer. What does a field of corn mean but that the plants which originally grew there have been ruthlessly destroyed to make way for those that better suit the purposes of man, and that an unknown quantity of animal life, dependent upon the plants so destroyed, has perished with them ? What does a herd of cattle in a field mean but the destruction of all wild cattle, till these became tame enough to await their turn of destruction for the service of man ? And as with plants and the inferior animals,

so does man deal with man. He endeavours to destroy those that do not suit his purpose, and to replace them by others. And this he does by many other methods besides those which we group under the name of war. Within the memory of living men there were many excellent but simple gentlemen who thought that what is called Free Trade would soon be adopted by every civilised country in the world, and that then wars would cease. The prediction has not been verified, nor can I see that the world would be very much the better if it had been. For commerce is not, as is generally supposed, a peaceful pursuit. What does successful commerce mean? The under-selling of competitors; which means in turn cheaper production than is possible to competitors. But cheap production, other things being equal, depends in these days chiefly upon two things—cheap labour, which means low wages, and the best of machinery. Who can tell how many lives have been sacrificed to low wages in the winning of any commercial competition; or how many men, women and children have been starved when machinery, either absolutely or practically new, has driven a mass of bread-winners out of employment? And these are the casualties only on the victorious side. What have they been on the beaten side, when whole industries have been ruined? If we could arrive at a just estimate of the

casualty lists filled by commerce, I doubt greatly if they would be lower than those filled by war. Improved machinery, in the case of a great many manufactures, is as truly an engine of destruction as a torpedo or a heavy gun. It is meant to destroy other competing machinery and to drive its workmen from it, just as a torpedo is meant to destroy a ship and send its crew to the bottom. A town deserted and falling to ruin owing to loss of trade and consequent loss of population, is as truly destroyed as if it had been battered to pieces by shot and shell.

This, it may be said, is an unkind way of stating the matter. The superior machinery supplants and replaces the inferior. Quite so. There is in a general way renewal as well as destruction; but the superior machinery does not replace the men who have perished in assuring its triumph on the one side, or in succumbing to that triumph on the other. And after all what is the general purport of war but to replace what is inferior by what is superior? What are the rise and fall of civilisations, empires, states, nations and communities, but the process of supplanting the inferior by the superior, or at any rate the subjection of the inferior to the superior? Military history is the history of that process, and it is no more the history of destruction than any other kind of history. I do not suppose

that the most tender-hearted member of the Society of Friends would take exception to the study of the legislative enactments whereby, quite apart from warlike measures, we wrested their former commercial superiority from the Dutch. He would not call it a history of destruction, and yet it was so—to the Dutch. In the case of a military war the casualty lists are published, and everyone says "How shocking." In the case of a commercial war it is announced that such and such a firm has closed its works through bankruptcy; and few, unless they chance to be share-holders, think more about the matter. There may be some hundreds of people deprived of their livelihood, but few consider that. Military victors feed their prisoners of war: commercial victors leave them to starve. And yet commerce is held to be humane, and war very much the contrary; while captains of industry are held in honour by men to whom the fame of a captain in war gives sincere and conscientious affliction.

Thus you see how futile, however well-intended, are peace-societies and similar institutions, inasmuch as they recognise only one description—the military—of war. It is terrible to think how true is the saying of Erasmus, *Homo homini lupus*. We like to be successful ourselves, and we like our friends to be successful also, but we seldom reflect

that every success is won at the cost of another's failure. Even here in Cambridge, and among those merriest of mortals, undergraduates, the stern inexorable law asserts itself. For one whom a class-list makes happy, how many does it make miserable? For one to whom it offers the prospect of food and warmth, to how many does it threaten cold and want? *Homo homini lupus*, that is individual history. *Gentes gentibus lupi*, that is universal history.

But to return to a question which I have still left unanswered, wherein lies the profit for men not of the military profession, of studying the principles and the history of war, with the terrible details in which the history abounds so frequently? One chief profit, as I take it, is to learn the nature of the supreme test to which a nation may be subjected, so that she may equip herself morally and physically to pass through the ordeal with success. Let me repeat to you that war is less a matter of courage than of endurance. Of really brave men, men who from sheer love of fighting cannot be kept out of fire, the proportion is about one in a thousand. Of real cowards, men who literally cannot be induced to face fire in any circumstances, the proportion is about the same. The remainder can by training and discipline be brought to do their duty with more or less bravery, which is sufficient—or at any

rate must be considered sufficient—for the purpose. Such training and discipline are a purely military matter, to which I shall presently return. But endurance depends upon moral and physical attributes which, though a great leader or regimental pride may do much to enhance them, are principally the concern of the statesman. Let us deal first with the physical requirements of a soldier.

First and foremost he must be mature, a man and not a boy; otherwise, no matter how great his pluck, he will never be able to withstand the hard work of a campaign. There is hardly a country which has not again and again filled up its muster-rolls with children, and deceived itself into the belief that it was enlarging its armies, instead of filling up its military hospitals and graveyards. Boys can of course do the work of garrisons within certain limits; but it is (to speak brutally) cheaper to knock them on the head at once and bury them at home than to send them upon active service in the field. On the other hand, men must not be too old, otherwise they succumb to rheumatic complaints in consequence of exposure to cold and wet. For the rest, the soundness of the feet, in order that men may be able to march; of the eyes, so that they may be able to see; and of the teeth, are of the greatest importance. An enormous proportion of men on active service die of dysentery or enteric fever, due

to bad and ill-cooked food; and want of teeth to masticate that food aggravates the evil immensely. Bad sight and bad teeth are very common in the inhabitants of large towns, as also of course is inferior physique generally. Such defects weaken a nation for war; and a wise government will not let them continue without endeavouring to arrest them.

But, apart from this, much may often be done by care and foresight to abate the hardships of a campaign. It is often inevitable that the men's clothing should be in rags, and their feet almost if not quite shoeless for a time; as also that they should be scantily fed and then not on the best of food; but, if this be borne in mind, and measures taken to keep abundant supplies of everything at the seat of war, together with transport to convey such supplies to the front, privation and suffering may be greatly lessened, and sickness proportionately decreased. People who have never studied military history do not realise that a campaign is a gigantic picnic, and that, unless careful arrangement be made long beforehand for every detail of food, forage, clothing and carriage, an army may perish before it can reach its enemy. Such arrangement involves a nicety of organisation of which the ordinary civilian never dreams. One great lesson therefore that all may learn from

the study of military history is, that the casualties through lead and steel are a trifle to those from hardship and the resultant sickness; and that these last may be very appreciably diminished by experience, forethought and organisation.

So much for the purely physical side of an army. The question of inspiring it with moral force could easily lead me into an endless disquisition upon the merits of different forms of civil government and different systems of education. I shall not be so foolish as to attempt anything of the kind; but I shall content myself with stating that the great secret of an army's moral force is that (in Cromwell's words) all ranks shall "know what they are fighting for, and love what they know." The most powerful of all purely moral forces is undoubtedly religious fanaticism, of which many instances will at once occur to you; but I question if among all its countless manifestations there are any quite so thorough as are found in the hosts of Islam. There are many instances of desperate courage and devotion among all races and all creeds, but I do not know where you will find a parallel, except in the annals of Mohammedan warfare, to the attack of the hordes of the Khalifa at Omdurman.

Another great moral force is political fanaticism; but as a rule there underlies all combative fanaticism, either consciously or unconsciously, that less exalted

element of human nature which is known as greed. Greed of course is of many kinds. It may arise from honest hunger and poverty ; or from the less honourable, though hardly less cogent, persuasion that those who have are the legitimate prey of those who have not. But its manifestations are uniformly the same, though they are often embellished by titles of honour. People who would not dream of robbing their neighbours, if the process were described to them in as many words, will take credit to themselves for spoiling the heathen or the Amalekites. Primitive tribes and clans, which have outgrown or exhausted the territory that at one time sufficed for their support, are not always so squeamish. They see a weak and prosperous neighbour, fall upon him without more ado, and eat him up. Christian nations and Mohammedans have frequently extinguished aboriginal tribes as heretics and unbelievers. We ourselves used to excuse our predatory excursions against the Spaniards upon the ground that Popish idolators deserved nothing better. Turn now to a case which is generally adduced as an example of an army inspired by political fanaticism—the levies which burst out from France against her neighbours on all sides in 1792 and 1793. They came, as they proclaimed, to carry the gospel of liberty, equality and fraternity into all lands ; their evangel was to be for the healing of the nations ;

they menaced war only to the nobleman's castle; they brought peace to the poor man's cottage. Were they really inspired by any such exalted sentiments? A few enthusiasts may have been; but not many. Did their faith in their new creed suffice to make them die for it cheerfully? Not in the least; for they ran away like sheep, until habit and discipline inured them to war. Did they conduct themselves, where successful, according to their noble professions? Not in the least. They plundered all classes impartially, and were loathed by all impartially. The truth is that their real object was not to preach a gospel at all, but to gather plunder. France had been ruined by the incredible follies of the Revolution; her resources were exhausted; and there was nothing for her but to rob her neighbours or perish. Her robberies prospered; a soldier of fortune rose up to take command of her armies; and under his leadership the principle of robbery was indefinitely extended. As Wellington put it with his usual shrewd insight, war to Napoleon was a financial resource.

Must hope of plunder then be reckoned as a great moral force in war? The question is extremely difficult to answer. Astonishing military successes have been achieved under no other stimulating influence than this—I would instance the sack of Rome by Charles of Bourbon in 1527—but

plunder, speaking generally, demoralises both the army and the nation that lives by it, for it leads to jealousy and divisions. You will remember at once, when I recall it to you, the story in the Old Testament of Saul's preservation of flocks, herds and prisoners in the face of Samuel's order that they should be annihilated. I strongly suspect that Samuel's motive for commanding the destruction of the plunder was apprehension lest the King, by offering to his followers a reward for their services, should steal away the hearts of the people and undermine the authority of the priesthood. On the other hand Saul may perhaps have been justified in supposing that his men would not fight the Amalekites without the assurance of a share in the spoil, and had consequently promised them a share beforehand. At any rate, it is certain that the incident so far estranged the ecclesiastical from the civil authorities that the former put forward a rival to oust Saul from the Kingship. This is a curious instance of an entire community being driven into civil war by a dispute as to plunder. Of its demoralising influence on an army the examples are endless, but I may mention to you the furious combats of the Spaniards and Germans over the spoil of Rome, which they had combined to capture and sack; the practical dissolution for a time of Wellington's troops after the storm of Badajoz,

and the insubordination and disunion of Napoleon's armies in Spain, when nearly every officer of rank was seeking to enrich himself, and employing his men to enrich him, instead of using them in the legitimate operations of war.

Nevertheless men will not go a-fighting continuously unless there is plunder, or some composition in lieu thereof, to stimulate them to constant exertion. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the military profession was very nearly a mercantile affair, pure and simple. Capitalists formed companies of soldiers for hire, and sought to indemnify themselves by plunder for their venture, very much after the fashion of a privateer or private man-of-war. The "purchase-system" under which, when I was a boy, British officers still purchased their commissions for a sum of money, was a relic of the old practice of buying shares in a military company. In many of our wars there was no individual plunder, but all captures were lumped together, sold, and divided in due proportion between all ranks of the army engaged. The army which stormed Seringapatam in 1799 divided £1,300,000 in this way; and beyond all doubt the hope of large profits was a great incentive to the men to endure many things and fight hard. Soldiers are almost invariably ill-paid. Very often their health is permanently impaired by the hardship and privation which they

undergo; and they demand, not unreasonably, some compensation for all their sufferings and peril. This is a fact which no statesman can afford to overlook. Even in the middle of the late South African war it was necessary to give to every private five pounds, and to every non-commissioned officer and officer still larger sums, according to their rank, as prize money in lieu of plunder.

I come next to patriotism as a moral force. We are apt to take it for granted that it always exists in every country; but this is not so, as the earlier wars of the French Revolution most plainly prove. Nor is it sufficient to say that the countries over which the French armies rode rough-shod were autocratically governed, while France enjoyed a freer form of government, for a democracy can, and very frequently does, govern quite as abominably as any autocrat or oligarchy. If a large proportion of a community be discontented with its condition it will feel no patriotism, and will do little or nothing towards defence of its country. It sees no object in fighting to maintain a state of things which it disapproves, and will not do so. Then, in case of invasion it will submit quietly and without an effort to the enemy's will, and allow him to take peaceful possession of its territory. If, on the contrary, the war be not defensive but offensive, the malcontents will lay themselves out to embarrass the ruling

authorities as much as possible, in order to secure political changes which they conceive to be political advantages. So long as the seat of operations is at a distance, the behaviour of the malcontents is always the same, whether they are of the highest or of the lowest class, whether the government under which they live be popular or despotic. Thus during the American War of Independence a considerable section of the English aristocracy threw the whole weight of its power and influence in favour of the revolting colonies, and to all intents assured their triumph. Thus also in the recent war between Russia and Japan a large section of the educated classes in Russia spared no efforts to stir up internal trouble, and crippled their country at the very moment when she bade fair to redeem all past failures and enter upon a successful campaign. In both cases the disaffected parties claimed to be the truest patriots, inasmuch as they had acted in the best interests of their country; though whether such a claim can be justified is a matter upon which men will differ until the end of time. It may, however, be doubted whether men can, unless in most exceptional circumstances, benefit their country by seconding their country's enemies; and it is probable that, when they profess to do so, they are animated rather by an intense desire to injure and humiliate their rulers than by any

principle of well-doing towards any one. If the war were brought home to their own hearths, they would in all likelihood make a stubborn fight for their defence; either from dread lest their neighbours should hang them; or, as it is more reasonable to suppose, from honest jealousy for their country and indignation against the invader. But because the scene of fighting is at a distance, they think that they may legitimately play fast and loose with their country's fortunes.

Now I cannot help thinking that if those who aspire to govern men, and even to lay claim to the title of statesmen, were to study military history, they might learn enough about the moral force of nations and armies to set them thinking very seriously. It is a force that is very difficult to build up and not very difficult to destroy; and yet politicians of all parties trifle with it as though it were an insignificant matter. It is impossible to devise a form of Government or to collect an administration which will satisfy all men; but, though everyone recognises the fact in theory, few make allowances for it in practice. It is sufficient for politicians of all ways of thinking in these days to say solemnly that the will of the majority must prevail. But why must it prevail? Because the majority is more likely to be right than the minority? Far from it: if we could believe that this were the

rule, the government of the world would be much easier than it is. No, the will of the majority must prevail because it can be enforced on the minority, which is only another way of saying that Might is Right. See how in this world of cant the terrible maxim, which men think applicable to war only, is daily in force all round us. Wise men therefore will be always moderate in their dealing with honest and respectable minorities, whether they differ from the majority in matters of religious, political or social faith, provided always that their dissent is not merely a cloak for evading the obligations of ordinary morality. Yet such moderation, though of the last importance towards amity and good understanding in a community and therefore towards its moral force in the event of war, is little more common to-day than at other periods of human history. There is really only one political or social principle which has any permanent worth, and it is expressed in the homely proverb "Give and take."

What is the civic form of this proverb? It is this, No rights without duties, no duties without rights. In England I am afraid—though I may be wrong—that for some time past there has been too much prating of rights, and too little reflection upon duties; though the commonwealth depends for its stability upon the equal recognition of both. What, you may ask, do you owe to the State? Well, you

owe to it gratitude for the fact that you can for the most part walk about decently clad and purse in pocket without danger of being knocked on the head ; and that you can pursue your lawful avocation in peace. But how if your clothes are in rags and you have no purse ? Well then, apart from all possible benefits from the poor law, you at least enjoy immunity from being knocked on the head as an unprofitable member of the tribe. The great difference between primitive and civilised societies is that the civilised recognise misfortune as a palliative to inefficiency, which the primitive cannot afford to do. We have still a right to say that a criminal is an inefficient citizen, but no longer that an inefficient citizen is a criminal ; and this, for some of us, is a considerable gain. Even if the State gave us no more than this, we are everyone of us debtors for more than we can repay. But, in the most highly organised states of the present time, the tendency is that the community at large shall contribute more and more towards making men physically and mentally into efficient citizens and towards saving them from the consequences of misfortune, but in return shall claim from them more exacting duties. It would perhaps be historically more accurate to say that in some cases the duties came first and the benefits afterwards ; but the point is that the principle of rights for duties and

duties for rights has been faithfully observed. Thus in Germany the State has set up machinery for education, for insurance against misfortune, for provision against old age, claiming in return from able-bodied citizens two years of military training, with liability to be recalled to the colours up to a certain age in the event of war. There are other states in which the same or less is given or claimed; but there are few of importance in Europe in which free education is not the right, and military training the countervailing duty. And this system has been adopted in every case, not only from bitter experience of disastrous defeat in war, but because foreign statesmen read military history. The bond of a common duty, impartially imposed upon all classes from the highest to the lowest, tends to soften minor differences and discontents, and constitutes in itself a great moral force.

So much for the moral force that can be instilled into a community by its statesmen: I come now to that which can be inspired only by the soldier, the unity, artificial but incomparably strong, which is bound up with the name of discipline. Military discipline—how some people loathe and others worship it; and how little the majority of both have really thought about it! What is its principle? The organised abnegation of the individual self in

favour of the corporate self. What is its object? That tens of thousands may act together as one under the guidance of a single will. What are its methods? Immediate and unquestioning obedience to superior command. Immediate and unquestioning obedience—that is what is the stumbling block, the *skandalon* to so many. There are of course a certain number of people who can obey no one, but must always be a law—and an exceedingly erratic law—unto themselves. The name of the poet Shelley will probably occur to some of you, but I am not thinking of such as Shelley. I have in my mind rather those excellent but generally unthinking persons who shrink with horror from the idea of a man's abdicating his civil rights. "What," they say, "a man must obey even an unjust command, under pain it may be of death! It is monstrous!" For purposes of civil life it might be monstrous, but not for purposes of implicit obedience, which is the thing that matters in an army. Let there be justice as far as possible by all means; but, as a general principle, it is better for an army that an injustice should be done than that an order should be disobeyed. This, however, is an argument that cannot appeal to our imaginary objector, because he has read no military history.

Then there is the unpleasant fact that immediate and unquestioning obedience is a thing not

easily acquired even with the best of good will. Careful and often tedious training is necessary before the obedience becomes instinctive and a second nature; and the process is not always a pleasant one. In the first place tyrannical teachers are always to be found, who make the lesson as odious as possible; and in the second there are some natures to which nothing is so revolting as order and method in the minutest detail. The temperament that calls itself artistic is particularly impatient of this description of discipline, and attaches to it the name of soul-destroying; but I have noticed that persons who claim to possess that particular temperament discover equal mischief to their souls in the punctual keeping of their appointments, the faithful fulfilment of their contracts, and the regular payment of their debts. In fact a little drill and discipline is the very thing that they most require. However, the school of implicit obedience is no doubt a hard one, and sometimes even distressing. There is much that seems—perhaps even a little that may actually be—unnecessary and pedantic in the instruction; and in time of peace the necessity for this is not obvious. It is inexpressibly galling to some characters to find the question *Why* answered unchangeably by the formula "Because orders must be obeyed." They chafe against the compression of

all natures into the same mould; and the conversion of one, who flatters himself (not always with reason) that he is an intelligent mortal, into a machine.

I shall deal with the weak side of military discipline presently. Meanwhile observe that its moral force is founded on one of the noblest of human, I might say of Christian, virtues. I have styled it organised self-abnegation—organised self-surrender of the individual for the sake of the general;—only possible through arduous training in self-denial, self-restraint and self-control. Observe that, although many religious orders have taken for their governance the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, the most formidable of all was that founded by an old soldier, who organised it upon a military model and gave its chief the title of General. The name of the Jesuits does not smell sweet in English nostrils, and yet its members have perhaps outdone all the world in self-sacrifice. "Go," the General said from time to time to some young Jesuit in the 17th century, "Go out to the wilds of North America; spread the gospel among the Red Indians; search out the land and take it into possession for the most Christian king." Without a word the command was obeyed. The missionary went forth, alone or with a comrade, undaunted by the prospect of being tied up to

roast before a slow fire, or have his fingers bitten off one by one ; he dwelt among savage men, lived their lives, subsisted on their food, and, without counting the risk of being lost or starved, found his way down the great rivers from the Upper Lakes to the Gulf of Florida. You know the great examples of heroism in our own army. You know the story of the *Birkenhead* ; and you may perhaps realise that it is this story which has inspired all English men and English women to show courage in a shipwreck. But I shall add just one story, a very short one, of the wreck of the *Warren Hastings*, which was carrying four companies of the King's Royal Rifle Corps and as many of the York and Lancaster Regiment, on the island of Reunion in 1897. When the ship struck, sentries of the Rifles were at once posted at various points on the lower deck, to guard the access to the spirit-room and such like ; and there they remained while the boats were lowered to take the battalion ashore. The water rose steadily upon them inch by inch, and had reached their chests, when at last an officer came to summon them also, last of all, to take their place in the boats. He collected them all, as he thought, but in the noise and darkness he missed one man and left him behind. The man saw his comrades disappear up the ladder, and the officer about to follow them, and not till then did he ask,

without quitting his post, "Beg pardon, sir, may I come too?" If ever you hear any man speak lightly of military discipline, tell him that story, for that Rifleman is worthy to be placed alongside the Roman sentry at Pompeii.

Yet it is very necessary that the working of military discipline should be most carefully studied in military history, in order that its defects, weaknesses and limitations may be thoroughly ascertained and realised. There is no greater mistake than to say that disciplined men are machines. They are nothing of the kind: they are flesh and blood; and it is most dangerous to treat them as anything else. Yet nothing is more common than for people to suppose that anything is good enough for soldiers because discipline forbids them to complain. Politicians in particular often appear to think that a soldier, in virtue of his discipline, can march all day and all night, dispense with food and drink, and lie out in cold and rain with no particular mischief to himself. I can assure you that in former days, within the memory of living men, English soldiers were housed in buildings and sent to sea in vessels that would have been thought too bad for valuable cattle. Tradesmen and contractors likewise presume upon the soldiers' enforced patience, and mobs will insult and pelt them, secure in the knowledge that the soldiers will not retaliate

without orders. This indeed, albeit infinitely mean and cowardly, is an unconscious tribute to discipline, but may easily strain it beyond endurance. The fact is that discipline which rests wholly upon fear is not the strongest. Inelastic and unsympathetic severity, even though it may not actually amount to injustice, can produce only a passive and discontented obedience, which speedily gives way to sulky insubordination under any unusual trial. It is when officers are not in touch with their men and do not consider them, that the hearts of soldiers are stolen away by agitators and malcontents. And then follows mutiny, which if begun in some choice corps may spread to a whole army, as in the French Revolution, and bring a dynasty and the traditions of centuries to the ground. The ill-treatment of men was common enough in old days, when the gaps between social classes were wide and the distinction between them carefully marked, but you will never find an instance of a successful army in which the officers did not share the hardships of the men. Hannibal, for one, frequently slept on the ground with his outposts.

It is when, as in most modern armies, the officers put their men before anything else in the world, that military discipline shines at its brightest. This does not mean leniency to irregularity or towards insubordination—a weak or indulgent officer is

neither loved nor respected—but the treatment of men as men instead of as children, attention to their wants, consideration for their feelings, zeal for their well-being, cultivation of their self-respect, forethought to train them to meet every exigency, endless endeavour to deserve their confidence. Then there arises in regiments that mysterious power which is called *esprit de corps*, when every soul in them from the colonel to the drummer feels that his own honour is bound up with the honour of the regiment, and that the honour of the regiment is the greatest thing in the world. And so you find—for one instance out of many thousand—such a battalion as that of the Fifty-seventh at Albuera, with two men in every three struck down, yet conscious of nothing in the dense smoke but of closing in to the colours and unquestioning resolution to die where they stood, rather than give way. So too you find a simple solitary private, in the story that I have already told you, content to go down alone in a sinking ship for the honour of the Sixtieth. Without knowledge of military history men are really unconscious of the existence of that most wonderful of moral forces, *esprit de corps* ; and it is not a thing of which anyone can afford to be ignorant.

Lastly military history gives us insight into the character and intellectual powers of some of the most remarkable men who ever lived. I shall

be told perhaps that the career of an Alexander or of a Caesar is but a paltry study compared with that of a Luther or a François Xavier. Be it so. Different characters attract different students, and great leaders of men, whether saints or soldiers, are always worthy of study. Moreover, it is a most important thing to realise that military history means the survey of administrative in at least as great a degree as strategical and tactical genius. You will all of you recall the happy phrase that was applied to Carnot—the organiser of victory; and Carnot was only one of many who have deserved the epithet. No man perhaps ever merited it better than Moses, if only through his standing order (which you will find in the book of Deuteronomy xxiii. 12–14) that when an army was in the field there should be appointed places for latrines outside the camp, and that all foul matter should be instantly buried. The regulation is justified by a noble precept, which in its essence is true for all time. "The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp to deliver thee and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore *shall thy camp be holy*, that he see no unclean thing in thee and turn away from thee." Foul camps mean enteric fever and dysentery, and these diseases mean the destruction of the host. To this day it may be said that the sanitary regulations of Moses have never been

superseded. How many Jewish victories may have been due to the observance of them we can only conjecture; how many hundred millions of lives have been sacrificed to the neglect of them—for it is only latterly that their value has been fully recognised—the Omniscient alone can know.

Turn from Palestine to Greece and look at the military constitution of Sparta founded by Lycurgus. Make a huge stride over the ages, and look at Chaka, the man of genius whose military organisation and training of his people would have made the Zulus masters of South Africa, had not the boundless resources of the British Empire dashed his work—though not without difficulty and defeat—at last to the ground. Look at the great men of modern times, whose names will be more familiar to you, Frederick the Great, Napoleon, Wellington, and take note that from the very beginning of history the greatest generals have almost invariably been in the very first rank not merely of military but of civil administrators. It may seem heretical to say so, but I personally am inclined to think that Napoleon's work as a civil Governor transcends even in its own kind the greatest of his military achievements. I, even as many other men, have gone through most of the thirty-six volumes of his correspondence; and I confess that his reorganisation of France in the first months of the Consulate—

crude and hasty as in many respects it was, owing to the urgency of the case and the desperate nature of the circumstances—appears to me the greatest thing that ever he did. But all three of these men are remarkable chiefly for the astonishing results which they achieved with small means. Frederick, in spite of terrible defeats and latterly an almost total failure of resources, contrived somehow to carry the Seven Years War to a successful end, and at its close to revive an exhausted Prussia. Napoleon took over a France demoralised by ten years of misrule, and sunk financially to a hopeless depth of bankruptcy, yet by squandering men in lieu of money he carried his eagles victoriously from end to end of Europe. Wellington had so few men that he could not squander them, and so little money that, owing to the general lack of specie, he was obliged to carry on the Peninsular War upon credit, and incidentally to administer the government of Portugal as well as direct the operations in the field, lest that credit should absolutely fail him. Yet by sheer administrative ability, patience and tenacity, he prevailed.

I have of design left the question of the technical study of strategy and tactics until the last. Strategy may, I think, be defined as the art of bringing armies up to the battle-field by the right way, in the right strength, at the right time; tactics as the art of

handling them on the battle-field to the best advantage. Of what profit is the study of these two arts to the citizen at large? Well, in the first place he will learn what may be termed his strategical geography, and why battles are constantly fought century after century in or about the same places. He will understand why, for instance, endless great actions for the mastery of India have been fought within fifty miles of Delhi; the significance of Stirling on the map of Scotland, and of Acre on the coast of Syria. He will perceive why, owing to changes in transport and armament, places whose names constantly occur in old diplomatic records have ceased to be of great account and are now seldom mentioned, whereas others, as I have said, retain their importance through endless generations. He will realise, further, how far strategic considerations enter into political arrangements of all kinds, as for instance that Bismarck the civilian was against the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine as tending to perpetuate the hostility of France, but was overruled by Moltke because the new frontier was worth 100,000 men. In fact it is not too much to say that knowledge of military history is essential to the right understanding not only of domestic and foreign politics, but of the whole story, written and unwritten, of the human race—which is mainly a story of fighting.

The interest of tactics is chiefly for professional men; but it is worth while to notice its main principles, which are simple. All fighting is, and has always been, of two kinds, hand-to-hand or shock action, at a distance or missile action. Goliath challenged the Israelites to shock action, and David killed him by missile action; and I dare say that the Philistines thought it unfair. Now, whether for shock or for missile action, it is very obvious that if you can overmatch your enemy in numbers—other things being equal—you are likely to get the better of him; and that if you are on higher ground than he is you can see him better than he can see you to throw things at him, and can charge him with greater impetus down hill than he can meet you with, uphill. It may be said broadly that the art of tactics is the art of bringing stronger numbers to bear at some given point, and taking or acquiring superiority of position. This is the physical side of tactics. The moral side (apart from discipline) lies chiefly in those two eternal and undying resources, known as the ambush and the surprise. Here the leader tries to upset an enemy's physical advantage of numbers and position by taking him unawares. There is no finer example of a surprise in the world than that of Gideon. Think of it—the silent march of 300 picked men in three companies through the darkness, each with his trumpet

and his torch hidden in a pitcher, the silent surrounding of the hostile camp just before dawn, when human vitality is at its lowest ; and then the silence broken by the crash of three hundred pitchers, the sudden flare of the torches, the braying of three hundred trumpets as if in signal to a host of thousands unseen in the night ; and the simultaneous yell "For the Lord and for Gideon." There was a wild panic in the Midianite camp, and no wonder. In the darkness they took to fighting each other, "every man's sword against his fellow." Of course they did. Exactly the same result was seen many times over during our last war in South Africa, and has been seen in every panic from Gideon's age to our own. Gideon was a man who studied moral force.

Thus we come back to the point from which we began. Military history is not the history of physical but of moral force, perhaps almost of the triumph of moral over purely physical force. Let no man say that such a subject is unworthy of our attention. It is unfortunately impossible to study deeply any department of the affairs of men without encountering much that is infinitely vile and base and sordid ; and military history is no exception to this rule. But it is rich also in noble and heroic deeds, not of valour only but of patience, self-sacrifice and endurance. I may be wrong, but I

think that I see in it grander and more frequent examples of devotion to duty than in any other branch of history. The opportunities, you will say, are greater; and there may be some truth in this; but I would add that the training to self-abnegation counts also for very much. It will harm none of us to know well this story of duty done for duty's sake; and it may be that, as the example of the *Birkenhead* has nerved all our race to face with calmness the utmost perils of the sea, so the remembrance of the proud history of our soldiers may brace each one of us, no matter how humble his sphere, to discipline himself in the self-denial and self-control which triumph over adversity.

LECTURE II

BRITISH MILITARY HISTORY

In my last lecture I attempted to deal with the broad subject of military history at large. To-day I shall treat of the narrower subject of British military history. There is nothing arbitrary or capricious in this; for British military history is, owing to our insular position, a thing apart.

Foreign nations, indeed, would say that a country which has never in the whole course of her existence put fifty thousand of her own children in line upon any battle-field and very rarely so many even as

thirty thousand, can have no military history ; but none the less we have one, which is in many ways remarkable and worthy of study.

Note in the first place that for five hundred years after the Conquest England was not a purely insular power. She had troublesome neighbours in Wales and Scotland, and her kings had possessions, and consequently troublesome neighbours, in France. Remember that it was not until 1558 that we lost Calais, and that, as long as we possessed it, we had so to speak a bridge-head which enabled us to enter France practically at any moment. This was a sad temptation towards foolish expeditions and waste of strength ; and it was a great blessing to us really when the capture of Calais removed it for ever.

Elizabeth, therefore, was our first purely insular sovereign. What manner of military force did she find at her accession, and what manner of organisation for creating and maintaining it ? The sovereign was empowered, as he still is, to call out every able-bodied man for the defence of the country ; and upon the different classes of freemen was imposed by an Act of 1558, which was based upon an older Act of 1285, the duty of providing themselves with arms according to their means. Long before 1558 fire-arms had been brought to such efficiency that a complete system of tactics had been founded for their use by the ablest soldiers on the Continent ;

but in England the Statute still professed contentment with the weapons of three centuries earlier, bows and bills ; and there were remarkably few fire-arms in the country at all. There were, however, great traditions derived in part from Saxon times, but strengthened, developed and enlarged by the victories of Edward the Third, his son Edward, Prince of Wales, and king Harry the Fifth, in France and in Spain in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

I told you in my last lecture that all fighting, from the earliest times to the present, is in the ultimate resort of two kinds—hand-to-hand or shock action, at a distance or missile action. In the hands of the English a very old missile weapon, the bow, had become, in the form of the long bow, the most deadly and formidable of its time. Every English boy was trained to the use of it, and was taught to bring every muscle of his body to bear upon it, just as in rowing you are taught not to row with your arms only, but with your legs also and with all the weight of your body. "My father taught me to lay my body to the bow," says Bishop Hugh Latimer. The result was that their arrows were discharged with great rapidity and accuracy, and with such strength that they were effective in the matter of penetration at an astonishingly long range. The shock action of mediaeval times, as you know,

was confined chiefly to mounted men-at-arms, clad in armour from head to foot, and furnished with lances, who moved in dense masses at very moderate speed, and trampled down everything that stood in their way. How did the English archers deal with them? They aimed mainly at their horses, which, maddened by the pain, ran away with their riders, and carried confusion everywhere; but being accurate shots, the archers aimed also at the joints of the harness—at the intervals between gorget and breast-plate, between breast-plate, or back-plate, and thigh-pieces, which were exposed by the swaying of the body, and above all the arm-pit when the arm was raised to strike. But how about the English men-at-arms, you will ask? Why did not the enemy shoot their horses with arrows, and make them unmanageable also? Here we come to the English peculiarity. The English men-at-arms always dismounted to fight, broke off their lances to a length that could be easily handled and, ranked together in a dense mass, used them as pikes. So here there was the tradition of a missile infantry, so to speak, steady and deadly shots; and of a shock infantry which could not be broken and, moreover, after winning a victory could mount and pursue on horseback.

The new tactics of the Continent, which the English had to learn, had taken much the same

direction. The Swiss, in order to keep mounted men-at-arms at a distance, had bethought them of ranging their infantry into dense masses, armed with pikes fourteen feet long, and this they had done with such success that they had vindicated the position of infantry as the most important element on the battle-field. Other nations took up the idea, either for mercenaries or national troops; and, with the improvement of fire-arms, missile infantry developed into musketeers, or "shot" as they were called, who fought entirely as skirmishers, while shock infantry was represented by dense masses of pikemen. Simultaneously the cavalry became a missile force. Unable to make any impression against a bristling wall of pikes, they gave up their lances and provided themselves with pistols, so as to shoot the pikemen down from a distance. Hence it was customary to cover the pikemen with heavy armour on breast and thighs, which prevented them from moving very fast. The fate of the battle, however, was determined by them. Musketeers and cavaliers worried each other and the pikemen for as long as they dared, but the ultimate issue was decided when pike met pike. The chief reason for this was the system adopted for maintaining a continuous fire. This was to range the musketeers in ten ranks, and let these ranks fire in succession, the first rank filing to the rear as soon as its weapons were discharged, in

order to reload, and leaving the second rank to do likewise, and so on. In theory the system was ingenious; but in practice it was found that men thought a great deal more about filing to the rear rapidly, than about firing steadily and accurately. Of course if heavy artillery could be brought within range of a square of pikemen, it might blast them off the field; but cannon were too cumbrous and difficult to move for this to be often possible; and thus the decision of the day was left, as it still is, to cold steel. You will see wonderful pictures of combats of pikemen, just as you see the like representations of fights with the bayonet. I doubt greatly if they ever occurred. Both sides approached each other with the pike or bayonet no doubt; but before they closed one side turned and ran away. All nations boast of their prowess with the bayonet, our own among others, but few men really enjoy a hand-to-hand fight with the bayonet, however much they may enjoy a hand-to-hand pursuit. You remember that the Homeric heroes, after a certain amount of close combat, invariably threw stones at each other; and the practice has never died out. English and French both talk much of the bayonet; but in Egypt in 1801 they threw stones at each other when their ammunition was exhausted, and one English sergeant was killed by a stone. At Inkerman again the British threw stones at the Russians, not

without effect; and I am told upon good authority that the Russians and Japanese, both of whom profess to love the bayonet, threw stones at each other, rather than close, even in this twentieth century.

To this stage, then, had the art of war advanced at Elizabeth's accession, but no effort was made to train the national forces according to the latest methods. A few foreign mercenaries were imported from time to time, and a great many English went abroad, and served either in the armies of Spain—which were the most efficient of their day—or in those of the revolted Dutch which, under the Princes of the House of Nassau, were rapidly improving upon the Spanish methods. Thus some ideas of foreign practice crept into England, and a great deal of foreign nomenclature, which still remains with us. Nearly all of our military terms are foreign, drawn mostly from the French, the Italian or the Spanish. Regiment, battalion, colonel, sergeant-major, captain, lieutenant, ensign, cornet, corporal, centinel—all are words borrowed from Latin sources, and one could multiply the number of instances. Pistol and howitzer are Bohemian, relics of John Zizka. Forlorn hope (which has nothing to do with the English word *hope*) is Dutch. Even Shakespeare speaks twice of recruits by the Spanish name *bisoño*, corrupted into Bezonian.

Little progress was made in Elizabeth's time, and no more in the reign of James I ; but meanwhile a great military reformer arose in the person of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, who recognised that missile action was that which must triumph in the future, and set himself to improve the firing tactics of infantry. This he did by reducing the depth of the infantry to three ranks, and forming the musketeers shoulder to shoulder, the front rank kneeling. He then distributed the whole of his battalions into sections, or platoons, of twenty to thirty men each, and introduced the system of firing by volleys of platoons ; the usual method being that the first, third, fifth, seventh and ninth platoons fired first in rapid succession, and then the second, fourth, sixth, eighth and tenth, by which time the odd-numbered platoons had reloaded and were prepared to begin again. Thus a continuous fire was maintained without unsteadiness or disorder ; and the system was so good that it lasted until the introduction of breech-loaders. There being many Scots—even whole regiments—and a good many English in the Swedish service, the drill and tactics of Gustavus became known to a number of people in both kingdoms.

Now followed the Civil War, wherein the armies on both sides were ridiculously inefficient until Cromwell, recognising that the King had most of

the gentlemen—that is to say the more efficient amateurs—upon his side, decided that he must train professional soldiers to beat them. So he raised his famous regiment of horse, and for the first time since the days of Harry the Fifth brought true military discipline to bear upon English soldiers. In 1645 the Parliament perceived that a whole army trained upon the new principle would mean the difference between triumph and defeat, and thereupon organised the famous host called the New Model Army, consisting of twelve regiments of foot, eleven regiments of horse and a train of artillery. The effect was immediate. The Royalist cause was utterly overthrown, whether upheld by English, Scots or Irish; the irresistible army displaced the Long Parliament and took from it its usurped authority; and Cromwell during five years of unrest and uneasiness kept the peace in the three kingdoms by means of regular troops and an armed constabulary. Never before or since have we been kept in such order. Scottish Highlanders, Irish Tories, English colliers—as lawless a people as the other two—were hammered and cowed into obedience. Some north-country colliers attempted a strike; "they would neither work themselves nor suffer others," said the newspapers. The Lord Protector sent a regiment of horse to the spot, and nothing more was heard of the strike. Nor was it only within

the British Isles that he was feared, for, in virtue of his army, he was dreaded throughout Europe. His reign was brief, but he contrived within his five short years to strike a fatal blow at Dutch commercial supremacy, to ensure by his regulations as to trade and navigation that it should pass to England, and to call representatives from an United Kingdom to a single Assembly at Westminster.

And now pause for a moment to look at the portentous changes that had come over England in the hundred years between the accession of Elizabeth in 1558 and the death of Cromwell in 1658. In the first place England, as I have said, had been finally cut off from the Continent; in the second she had become mistress in her own house, for, though Scotland was not administratively joined to her, the two crowns had been united upon one head and closer union was only a question of time; while Ireland had been subjected to so stern a discipline that she still chafes at the remembrance of it. Insular therefore the British Isles were as never before in their history; and yet in the earlier half of the seventeenth century there had been laid by private adventurers under Royal Charter the foundations of a colonial empire in North America and the West Indies, that is to say in the temperate and in the torrid zone, as also of a great agency for foreign trade in India. Moreover Britain's powerful neighbour,

France, had almost simultaneously formed settlements or trading establishments precisely in the three same quarters. Almost at the instant therefore when the British were relieved of the perils and anxieties of a land frontier at home, they began to acquire such a frontier over seas. Lastly they had evolved, in what may be called its perfected state, a scheme of commercial policy which was not likely to make for peace with their neighbours. Meanwhile, owing to the accidental circumstance of a civil war and the happy advent of a man of genius, they had produced quite casually the very thing that was needed for the new conditions, a regular army subject to proper military discipline.

When Charles II was restored, the intention was to disband the entire army of the Commonwealth, or to keep at most a regiment of foot-guards, which had fought against the forces of the Commonwealth in Flanders, and a regiment of horse-guards, composed of Royalist gentlemen. But as these showed themselves inefficient in dealing with the London mob, two of the Parliamentary regiments were also retained, Monk's of infantry—now the Coldstream Guards—and a composite body of horse, which we now know as the Blues. This sufficed for domestic police ; but soon there arose the question of colonial garrisons, for Katharine of Bragança, Queen of Charles II, had brought to him as a dowry Tangier

and Bombay ; and there were other places, notably New York and St Kitts, where the close neighbourhood of the French made a little protection very desirable. How were these to be provided ? It was a time-honoured custom in England that all fortified places should have a small permanent garrison indissolubly attached to them, rather to keep the buildings in order than to provide for their defence ; and this custom was now extended. A few companies were raised for New York and St Kitts, and two regiments of foot and one of dragoons for Tangier ; but even so it was necessary to send the Guards abroad from London to quell a rebellion in Virginia, and to give further assistance at Tangier. In India the East India Company pursued the same policy, keeping some companies of white troops at Bombay and Madras, and forming also companies of natives, the number of which was constantly increased, for defence of their factories.

James II who succeeded his brother in 1685 was a trained soldier and sailor who had seen much active service, and an admirable departmental administrator. He made a pretext of Monmouth's rebellion to augment the standing army considerably; and, if more time had been given to him, he would probably have established an efficient War Office and laid the foundations of a sound military system. Further, noticing the danger to the American colonies from

their constant divisions and quarrels in the presence of the smaller but perfectly united and organised French settlements, he remodelled the governments of many of them, grouping them together under English Governors, who were also soldiers, so that in time of danger there might be harmonious action and efficient defence. These changes, principally, cost him his throne.

During all these years the English had never ceased to chafe at the continued existence of a standing army. The country gentlemen, who had made the Revolution of 1642, had the terror of Oliver Cromwell before their eyes, and dreaded lest the Stuarts might emulate his summary and efficient methods. They professed, some of them no doubt conscientiously, solicitude for the liberties of England, forgetting that their forerunners of the Long Parliament had abolished the Monarchy and the House of Lords and erected themselves into a permanent committee of tyrants. They protested that a standing army was unknown to the Constitution of England, but they had not awaked to the fact that there was a British Empire in the making, and that such an Empire requires police. They could not, or at any rate did not, look one inch before their noses except at one principal object, namely the supplanting of the monarchy, in substance if not in fact, by an oligarchy of their noble selves. They

therefore encouraged sedition and discontent with the new arrangements in the colonies, and invited William of Orange to come with an armed force and accept the Crown from them. It suited William's policy exactly to have in his hands the resources of England for his desperate struggle against France; and he came, bringing with him the certainty of a great war.

It has been my fate to study the departmental administration of England at various periods, but I have never found it quite so corrupt and inefficient as in the early years of King William's reign. James had improved it amazingly in his three years of power; but his men were of course displaced in favour of the Whig magnates and their nominees, naturally with bad results. The administrative reforms of James in the American colonies were likewise upset by the Revolution; and this folly brought us within measurable distance of the loss of North America, besides taking the resources of England to defend people who ought to have been able to defend themselves. However there the matter was. It was necessary to raise a number of regiments and improvise an army for the pacification of Ireland, which was, I think, the very worst force ever put together under the English flag. After many disgraceful episodes Ireland was reconquered; and then the army, which was by this

time beginning to improve, was transported over to Flanders for operations there. It fought in many severe actions with credit but mostly without success, for William III was not a great general. However, it learned a great deal, particularly in the matter of sieges, of which it had known very little, and being thrown into company with some good troops and into opposition against others, it was roused to emulation of the high standard of French and Dutch efficiency. In 1697 the war came to an end through the exhaustion of both parties.

Of the solid improvements effected by the incidents of this war, the first was the passing of the Mutiny Act, in consequence of the mutiny of a regiment which was faithful to King James. This Act empowered the king to punish military crimes, for which the civil law provided no penalty. A standing army being unknown to the Constitution of England, the Act was passed for twelve months only, a ridiculous piece of pedantry which is still perpetuated in the Annual Army Act. The next reform was the adoption of the bayonet, a recent invention, which united the pike and the musket into a single weapon, and made an end of the distinction between shock infantry and missile infantry. A third was the gradual disuse of the pistol by cavalry; the discarding more and more of

its defensive armour and the reversion to shock action by the charge at high speed.

Immediately upon the conclusion of the peace there was a howl in the Commons for the reduction of the Army; and it was carried that the English establishment should be fixed at no more than seven thousand men, though the much poorer island of Ireland had been permanently charged by an earlier act with an establishment of twelve thousand. I must explain that until 1708 there were three separate military establishments for England, Scotland and Ireland, and after 1708 two for Great Britain and Ireland until the Act of Union in 1800. Moreover, you must remember that even within the memory of living men the infantry and cavalry were under the War Office, the artillery and engineers under the Office of Ordnance, and the commissariat and transport under the Treasury, so that, while the three kingdoms were disunited, there were nine offices concerned with the administration of the Army; and the colonels, who were responsible for the clothing, made a tenth authority. Hence it was no easy task to get the Army under way for any duty; while the creation of any new force was a most bewildering labour. The Commons, however, cared for none of these things. France was evidently only taking breath for another spring; but that they ignored, and, as I have said, cut down the Army to

the ridiculous figure of nineteen thousand men. William very nearly abdicated the throne of England in disgust at their conduct.

Here then we must notice the first flagrant instance of a besetting sin, which, practically from the very beginning up to the present time, has afflicted and still afflicts the House of Commons. No sooner is the country at peace than it raises a cry for the reduction of the Army. In the eighteenth century this cry was very much a matter of faction. The Whigs had always bitterly opposed a standing army under the Stuarts, when they thought it adverse to their interests; and the Tories naturally conceived a mortal detestation of it after it had become a weapon in the hands of the Whigs. Thus both parties were committed to general discouragement of the force; and any member who desired to pose as a champion of liberty could do so effectively by denouncing the evils of a standing army. It has been my hard fate to wade through a prodigious number of speeches upon this subject, and I have been absolutely nauseated by their hollowness and cant. It is of course possible for a man to object sincerely and conscientiously to any description of army; but I have never met with such a one in the Parliamentary debates of the eighteenth century. Their abuse of standing armies, in which was generally mixed some vituperation of the military profession

at large, was simply hypocrisy and cant, most mischievous and dangerous, inasmuch as it brought the calling of a soldier into contempt, and kindled the entire civil population into hostility with the military.

Compelled to reduce the Army to a mere handful of men, William sought to turn this handful to the best account by keeping the skeletons of a great many regiments, which might on emergency be filled out with additional men, rather than a very few complete regiments ready to take the field at once. He was quite right ; and his example has repeatedly been followed down to our own days ; but the system of skeleton regiments means always unreadiness for war. In the haste and urgency of the first hostilities all the trained men are swept into a few battalions, so as to fill up their empty ranks ; those few battalions are sent into action ; in six months they are so much reduced by losses as to be ineffective ; and you are left with nothing but recruits who need two or three years to convert them into soldiers. This has happened again and again, and the first instance of it came in 1701. In November 1700 the acceptance of the throne of Spain for his grandson by Louis XIV roused all Europe to arms ; and Louis to secure his object invaded Spanish Flanders, surrounded several towns which were occupied, under the Treaty of 1697, by Dutch troops, and so

cut off fifteen thousand of William's best men. Under a former treaty of alliance with Holland England was bound to furnish to her ten thousand men, and both Houses of Parliament prepared faithfully to fulfil the obligation. Twelve battalions were accordingly ordered to the Low Countries from Ireland, eked out of course by a great many young soldiers, but with a fair leaven of old ones; and the country flattered itself that it would escape with no further burden. But, as usual, Parliament had forgotten the Empire. Bad news came just at the same moment from the West Indies, and it was imperative to send two thousand more men to that quarter. Thus at one fell swoop the garrison of Ireland was snatched away, and it was necessary to raise at once ten thousand new recruits and four new battalions. Before the end of the year Louis XIV recognised the son of James II as King of England; and Parliament, at last roused to indignation, agreed to furnish a contingent of forty thousand men—eighteen thousand British, and the rest foreigners. Thereupon orders were issued for the raising of fifteen more new regiments, at enormous expense; for, in consequence of the ill-treatment of the army by Parliament at the close of the last war, men could not be tempted to enlist except by large bounties. In 1703 the English share in the contest extended to the Spanish Peninsula, and

eight new regiments were raised for the purpose. In 1704 the capture of Gibraltar and other operations demanded the levying of six more regiments; in 1706 thirteen new regiments were added; and to make a long story short, before the war ended in 1713 sixty-nine new corps of horse and foot had been formed to carry on the war.

But we must not leave that war without a sketch of the greatest of English generals who conducted it. John Churchill was born, you remember, in 1650, received his first commission in the Guards in 1667, saw active service against the Moors in Tangier a year or two later, and serious warfare in 1672 against the United Provinces under Condé, Turenne and Luxemburg, continuing to serve them under the colours of Louis XIV, as was not uncommon at the time, until 1677. In the course of those five years he learned his work under the great master Turenne, while fighting another great master, Montecuculi. In 1689 he commanded a small contingent of British troops against the French once more in Flanders; besides which, saving a little work in Ireland, he was employed no more by William until 1698; being suspected, I fear with justice, of treasonable relations with the exiled King James II. Finally in 1702 he was appointed to the command of the Allied Forces in the Low Countries, thus finding himself for the first time a general-in-chief

at the age of fifty-two. In those days of bad roads there were few districts where armies could keep the field, owing to the difficulty of feeding them; for a campaign, as I told you in my first lecture, is a picnic. The delta of the Rhine and Meuse was a cock-pit because it was in the first place rich in food, and in the second traversed by navigable rivers and canals, which made the transport of victuals, of heavy guns, and of ammunition comparatively easy. But being a cock-pit, its waterways were studded with innumerable fortresses, constructed to prevent ingress into France from the north, and into what we now call Belgium but which in Marlborough's time was known as the Austrian Netherlands, from the south. Hence it naturally followed that a war in that quarter signified a war of sieges; and the French Court was fond of sieges, because it could attend them in state and take charge of the operations with much glory and little discomfort or danger. It must be added that incessant warfare in that unfortunate country had made every feature in it so familiar, that the ordinary tactical and strategical movements in it were as well known as the moves on a chess-board.

It was a mark of Marlborough's originality of mind that on this familiar ground he contrived always to do something unexpected. Had he not been hampered by disloyal Dutch Generals and

timid Dutch deputies, who controlled the Dutch contingent of his army and therefore the Commander-in-Chief also, he would have driven the French out of Flanders in two campaigns. As it was, these so-called allies deliberately foiled him again and again; and, since the French arms had been uniformly successful against the Imperial troops on the Upper Rhine and Danube, the way to Vienna was by the year 1704 practically open to the French armies. Then it was that Marlborough, seeing that the case was desperate, conceived the magnificent idea of a march of some three hundred miles from the Low Countries to join the Imperial army on the Danube. The difficulties were immense. In the first place he had to gain permission from numbers of petty princes to pass through their territory; in the second he had to provide magazines of food and clothing for his army all along the line of march, as well as money to pay them with; and all this he had to do with secrecy and circumspection for, in the third place, it was essential that the French armies should gain no inkling of his intentions, but should be absolutely deceived by his movements until he was so far advanced upon his way that he could not be caught. It seems impossible that such a thing could have been done; but done it was; and the two victories of the Schellenberg

and of Blenheim were the result. Moreover, this campaign, though the most celebrated because of its extreme originality and boldness, by no means stands alone as an example of Marlborough's surpassing skill in the field. You may go through the whole of the campaigns that he fought in Flanders, ten in all; and in every one you will find some salient feature which betrays the master. The forcing of the French lines on the Geete in 1705; the feint which beguiled Vendôme into a fatal blunder at Ramillies in 1706; the wonderful march before Oudenarde in 1708; the investment of Tournay in 1709; the amazing wiles by which he turned the lines of La Bassée in 1711—any one of these achievements would suffice to make the fortune of an ordinary general.

What then were the qualities which made Marlborough so astonishingly successful in the field—and not in the field only—for you must remember that he was no less great as a diplomatist than as a general? First I should say what Wellington termed his strong cool common-sense. This sounds perhaps a small matter to you; but what after all is common-sense? It is above all the faculty of seeing things as they are, and of framing your action accordingly. The faculty of seeing things as they are, swift, true and penetrating insight into the heart of things, undistracted

by their outward semblance—this, whether it be the attribute of statesman, general, poet or painter, is genius. And to frame your actions, as a man of action, upon real insight, what does that mean ? It means transcendent moral courage, the courage of faith in one's own judgement, the courage to depart from beaten tracks, the courage to brave the disapprobation of those who cannot do without such tracks, the courage, in a good sense, to take liberties. It is the union of courage with insight which makes a man original. And there was another form of genius which Marlborough possessed in a supreme degree, the faculty of taking infinite pains. When his army started for the Danube not a man knew whither he was bound ; yet at every stage food was ready for all, and at certain points shoes to replace those worn out on the march, and money to provide the troops with pay. For, as Marlborough well knew, soldiers who have not what they need will help themselves, and plunder means indiscipline, and indiscipline turns an army into a rabble. Any officer can flog and shoot and punish, and say that he enforces discipline ; but a good officer prefers to enforce it by removing all temptation to indiscipline. Next, Marlborough possessed in a transcendent degree the divine gift of patience—patience which conquers all things. His temper was almost

miraculously placid and calm. Time after time the Dutch deputies thwarted his shrewdest strokes and most brilliant combinations; and time after time he endured their maddening mischief without a murmur, without even a semblance of displeasure, waiting for better times, and preferring to bear almost any mortification rather than endanger the common cause. There are few things greater in Marlborough than this. "I would not have that man's temper for the world," he is reported to have remarked when watching a groom who was fighting his horse in the saddle. So strongly marked was this characteristic that when once, in order to deceive his enemy, he grew from day to day more cantankerous and pretended at last to lose all self-control, his army declared sorrowfully that Corporal John had lost his wits. And this epithet—Corporal John—brings me to the last great gift of Marlborough, his extraordinary personal charm. It nowhere appears that he laid himself out particularly to attract his fellow-creatures; but not one of them could resist him. His men adored him. It was not only that he enjoyed their confidence as a successful leader; but that he commanded their affection. And others shared this feeling as strongly as the soldiers. In 1705 he narrowly escaped capture by a marauding party of French. On his arrival at the Hague after the

incident the whole population, high and low, turned out to welcome him, the poor crowding round him with tears of joy and kissing even his horse and his boots. Of course there is a dark side to his character, and much has been made of his avarice and his treachery. But I have noticed that men who begin with nothing and rise to great estate, as did Marlborough, are apt to be careful of sixpences to the very end ; and I do not know that it is to their discredit. It is certain too that he declined even to look at an enormous bribe offered by Louis XIV to obtain an advantageous peace. Moreover, you will find that at all times and in all countries while the issue of a struggle between two dynasties is still doubtful, men tend to keep upon friendly terms with both. I do not say that this trait is a beautiful or an honourable one ; but that it is the rule and not the exception is beyond doubt ; and we must take poor human nature as we find it. Fortunate are we when we find this weakness redeemed by such great qualities as were possessed by Marlborough.

The Peace of Utrecht which brought the war to an end was, as you remember, the work of the Tories, who had succeeded in ousting the Whigs and disgracing Marlborough. Before the Treaty had been signed, they had reduced the British establishment to twenty-two thousand men ; and,

when the Whigs returned to power upon the accession of George I in 1714, they continued the evil work which the Tories had begun. By 1719 the establishment had been reduced to twelve thousand men, making with the same number in Ireland a nominal total of twenty-four thousand. Yet the Treaty had added to the Empire Gibraltar, Minorca, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, all of which required garrisons; there was no police in the British Isles; the organisation of the Militia was so antiquated that the force was absolutely useless; and there was always danger, as the country experienced in 1715, of a Jacobite rising in Scotland. Moreover, the original system of defence in the West Indies was rapidly becoming obsolete; and it was pretty evident that the burden must shortly be transferred to the Imperial forces. No consideration could move the British Parliament to accept the Army as a necessary institution. Walpole in 1722 at last insisted that the British Establishment should be raised permanently to eighteen thousand men; but even so it would have been impossible to collect ten thousand for any emergency without leaving the royal palaces and strong places unguarded. Yet Parliament, not content with keeping an inadequate army, insisted also that it should be inefficient. In Ireland, from want of billeting accommodation, barracks had been built

for the troops; but nothing could persuade Parliament to extend the same system to England. No! the regiments must be broken up and scattered among ale-houses, "in order that the people might feel the burden that lay upon them." Moreover, hon. members conceived that ale-houses grew as abundantly at Gibraltar, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland as in England; and could hardly be brought to house the garrisons of these places adequately. Scores of men died in all these spots from exposure—and why? Because the nation had laid itself in bondage to a canting phrase. This ill-treatment of the soldiers, joined to perpetual reviling of the military profession, of course made the Army unpopular. Men were unwilling to enlist and very ready to desert, which led in turn to high bounties to tempt recruits; and this again led to fraudulent enlistment and hideous waste of money. Of all the cant that ever was canted in this canting world none is so cantful as the assertion that neglect of military precaution is economy. Yet the British people after two centuries' experience of its falsehood still hugs the notion passionately to its bosom.

The peace was broken in 1739 by a sudden outburst of national cupidity for the wealth of Spain; but from this point, where the struggle for Empire becomes acute, I shall in this lecture

confine myself to our wars in Europe only, leaving those in the Colonies and in India for two future lectures. Before the quarrel with Spain was fairly ended, we found ourselves entangled in the War of the Austrian Succession, with an obligation to furnish sixteen thousand men to uphold the cause of Maria Theresa. British and French, by a curious fiction, were engaged at the outset only as auxiliaries upon either side; and they actually fought the battle of Dettingen before war had been formally declared between them. From the spring of 1744, however, they met as principals and, since the French had been triumphantly driven from Germany at the end of 1743, on the familiar ground of the Austrian Netherlands. The British contingent was increased from sixteen thousand men in 1743 to twenty-five thousand in 1745, the balance of the force being composed of Dutch and Austrians; but this strength in the field, trifling though it was, was only attained by reducing the garrisons of Great Britain to fifteen thousand men, mostly raw recruits. The Duke of Cumberland on the 11th of May, 1745, fought and lost a murderous battle at Fontenoy; and in July there came the astounding news that Prince Charles Edward had landed in Scotland and was gathering the Highland clans about him. In the whole of North Britain there were only three thousand untrained men who wore the red coat;

and bold action combined with good fortune on the part of Prince Charles soon filled these with the spirit of panic. Within little more than two months he was at Edinburgh and, but for the garrisons of the Castle of Stirling and one or two lesser strongholds, master of the country. Urgent messengers were sent to Cumberland in Flanders for reinforcements; and not English troops only, but Dutch and Hessians, were hurried across the German Ocean to save the throne of the Guelphs. There was every reason to dread lest the remnant of the army in Flanders, reduced to utter weakness by the loss of these detachments, should be overwhelmed by the French; but fortunately the enemy took no advantage of their opportunity. Meanwhile Charles by skilful manœuvring evaded the troops opposed to him and reached Derby; and there now seemed to be nothing to prevent him from entering London. Fearing, however, the closing in of the British forces in his rear, and hearing that French troops had landed at Montrose to join him, he retired once more to Scotland; nor was it until he had won two or three further small actions, that he was finally and hopelessly defeated at Culloden. By that time, though he had landed originally with but seven companions and had never commanded more than seven or eight thousand mostly undisciplined men, he had kept the bulk of the British Army

employed for over nine months, and had beaten several detachments of it handsomely. The episode is generally treated as a romantic adventure; but it is really one of the most discreditable to be found in our history; and it was due entirely to the fanatics, both Whig and Tory, who were always clamouring against a standing army.

After the defeat of the insurgents the war was continued in the Low Countries, where the Allies sustained two more defeats, until in 1748, owing to the exhaustion of all parties, it was closed by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, leaving the French and English at the end very much as they had been at the beginning. In a way it might seem that the British had been dragged into the contest mainly on account of the Kingdom of Hanover, but, as we shall see in a future lecture, the war resolved itself into a continuation of the struggle with France for the possession of the new world. That struggle in fact never ceased over the seas, both east and west, and early in 1756 it came to an issue in open war. As usual England was unready. German troops were actually imported for the defence of the realm; Minorca was taken by the French; everything went wrong in America; and the state of affairs seemed to be desperate. At last a competent Minister, William Pitt the elder, was raised to power and from that moment things began to improve.

The foreign troops were sent back to Germany; their place was taken by Militia; and an immense levy of recruits was begun for the increase of the regular Army. In the year 1756 France, Austria, Russia and Sweden leagued themselves together to crush Frederick the Great; and Pitt, perceiving that America might be conquered in Germany, decided to send a contingent of British troops, together with Hanoverians and Hessians, to Frederick's assistance. Moreover, as we had no competent general of our own, he asked Frederick to provide one; and thus for the first time British troops were placed under the command of a foreign general for service on the Continent. Few people know anything of the campaigns of Ferdinand of Brunswick, though they are distinguished by two of the finest performances of the British soldier: of the infantry at Minden, and of the cavalry at Warburg. And the reason of this is that, as I have said, the expedition, so far as England was concerned, was a diversion to help her to the conquest of the Empire. That conquest proceeded apace during the years 1759 to 1762, and by the end of the latter year we had expelled the French from Canada, India and the West Indies, besides depriving the Spaniards of Havana and Manila. The process demanded a great number of troops, for seventy-five per cent. of the men in the West Indies died or were

incapacitated for further service, and it is here that we strike the weak point of Pitt's military administration.

The great Minister saw the importance of reorganising the Militia, though as a matter of fact he never enforced his own scheme of passing all able-bodied men through the ranks—or in other words of instituting national service. But he never matured nor even considered (so far as we can discover) any sound scheme for maintaining the voluntary army that was serving abroad. His only plan was to name a certain sum for bounty, and scatter broadcast commissions to any individuals who would undertake to raise independent companies or regiments. In this way the nominal strength of the Army was brought up to one hundred and fifty battalions of infantry and thirty-two of cavalry, the numbered regiments of infantry being as many as one hundred and twenty-four. Comparatively few of these new regiments survived, because they had been formed simply and solely to be broken up immediately and drafted into other battalions. But what did this mean? It meant in the first place that hundreds of officers went about the country trying to make money out of the recruiting business by obtaining recruits for less than the prescribed bounty, and pocketing the difference. It meant secondly that crimps arose by the score who

contracted to supply recruits to these officers, of course at a considerable profit to themselves, and that thus there were so to speak two middlemen to be paid out of the bounty as well as the recruit. The inevitable result was that the country paid vast sums to obtain worn-out old men, half-witted lads and weedy boys, who were absolutely useless in the field, and served only to fill graves and hospitals. Moreover, it was saddled with the obligation of giving half-pay to field-officers, captains and even subalterns, who had gained their rank by the simple process of a bargain with the crimps. Meanwhile the recruits, being enlisted not for some old corps with a regimental history and a regimental pride of its own, but for some ephemeral battalion which was dispersed as soon as formed, felt no sentiment of honour in their calling and deserted right and left. One consequence of this exceedingly wasteful system was that the resources of England both in money and men were exhausted before peace was made, and that the war could not have been carried on for another twelve months even if it had been necessary. But yet more fatal than this was the misfortune that the system, owing to its supposed success, received consecration from the great name of Pitt. In the bitter struggle with France which began in 1793 and ended at Waterloo I have said that France squandered men to save money,

and that England squandered money to save men. The elder Pitt squandered both money and men.

The conclusion of peace in 1763 found England in possession of Gibraltar and Minorca in Europe; Bermuda, the Bahamas, several West Indian Islands and practically the entire continent of North America east of the Rocky Mountains from the mouth of the St Lawrence in the north to the Lower Mississippi in the south. I omit the name of India, for that is a subject to be treated separately. The military establishment of England and Ireland for the defence of this vast Empire was fixed at about forty-five thousand men, two-thirds of them roughly speaking at home, and one-third abroad. This was neither more nor less than madness; yet nevertheless many were found, so great a man as Burke among them, to condemn the "huge increase" as they called it of the Army. But this was not the worst. Prices generally had risen and the pay of the soldier was too small for his subsistence; wherefore recruits could hardly be obtained by any shift, and the ranks of regiments were miserably empty. Reeling under the burden of the debts bequeathed by the late war, England proposed to the Colonies that they should share that burden with her. The North American provinces admitted the justice of the claim but made no effort to meet it; whereupon the British Government, after exhausting all expedients for

obtaining a contribution from them, fell back upon the only possible solution of the problem—impartial taxation of all the Colonies by Act of the Imperial Parliament, with a special provision that every penny of the money so raised should be spent in the Colonies themselves. A faction in the Colonies raised a loud outcry over this; and the question, owing to mismanagement in England and to the provocative violence of the American agitators, finally issued in war between Mother-country and Colonies.

The task of bringing America to submission by force of arms was a military operation beyond the strength of any nation in the world at that time, and very far beyond that of England as she was in 1775. No effort was made to augment the Army until hostilities had actually broken out, and consequently there were no troops at hand. Recruiting, moreover, was so difficult, owing to the insufficiency of the pay, that the country resorted to the hiring of German mercenaries and to the transfer of Hanoverian battalions to Gibraltar and Minorca, so as to release four British battalions from thence. Faction violently obstructed all military measures until a great disaster to our arms in 1777 made it practically certain that France would declare war; but then, in spite of all the ravings of the King's enemies at home, patriotic feeling prevailed, and

fifteen thousand men in new regiments were raised by private subscription alone. Troubles multiplied now on all sides; troubles in India, in Ireland, in Great Britain, everywhere. France declared war in 1778, Spain in 1779; Holland became an open enemy in 1780; and the Northern Powers formed an Armed Neutrality to curb our pretensions at sea. What with regular troops and embodied militia we had more than one hundred and eighty thousand British soldiers afoot, besides some twenty thousand Germans; but this was not enough. Our preparations, thanks to Parliament's eternal jealousy of the Army, were made too late. Our military policy was wrong, for we dispersed our forces so as to endeavour to hold every point; and thus we were everywhere overmatched. The war ended with the loss of America and very nearly of India also; of Minorca in Europe, of Senegal and Goree in West Africa, and of St Lucia and Tobago in the West Indies.

It might be supposed that England, after such a disastrous lesson, would have set her military house in order. Nothing was further from the thoughts of the Ministry which governed her after the conclusion of peace. They—Lord North and Mr Fox—were in such a hurry to get rid of the Army that they discharged every man that they could, and allowed the garrison of England to sink below seven thousand men. By this time India demanded a garrison of

over six thousand men, and the Colonies still left to us, together with Gibraltar, twelve thousand more. Besides these, the estimates allowed for thirty-two thousand men in Great Britain and Ireland; but not above half of them were forthcoming because recruits would not enlist; and the reason why they did not enlist was because their pay was insufficient to keep them from starving. William Pitt the younger took over the administration in 1784, and did admirable service in setting the national finance upon a sound footing, but would do nothing for the Army. A dangerous war in India compelled him to allow some new regiments to be raised at the expense of the East India Company; but though thrice in seven years the country was on the verge of an European war, he did nothing for the British soldier until 1792 when he grudgingly doled out to him a small pittance. He suffered the militia to decay in number and efficiency; and he almost destroyed the discipline of the regular troops by failing to provide them with a military head. In 1789 the French Revolution broke out, and the course of events in France was in itself enough to demand some increase of our military resources; but even so late as at the close of 1792 he actually reduced the British establishment. Within a very few months he found himself dragged into a war which to all intents did not end until 1815.

Pitt's idea was to compel France to submission by taking all her Colonies and ruining all her commerce ; but it was necessary to send troops at short notice to Holland in order to hearten the Dutch to resistance ; and, as there were no others to send, he despatched the Guards. The remainder of the Army, most excellent men but very few in number, he hurried off to the West Indies. This done, he set to work to make the Army, which should have been ready made, according to his father's methods by large bounties and giving commissions to any who would raise companies and regiments. Endless corps of weakly men were thus created, and endless bad officers admitted to the service. The old soldiers in the West Indies did their work admirably, but perished almost to a man, as I shall explain to you in another lecture. In the Low Countries also, where the British were not fairly used by the Allies under whose command they were working, the old soldiers were soon used up ; and we were left without any Army. Even at home, where there was some peril of invasion, Pitt did not pass the nation through the ranks of the Militia, as he should have done, but either enlisted soldiers voluntarily for home service only, or permitted the citizens to enrol themselves in innumerable little useless bodies of Volunteers. The operations in the Low Countries ended disastrously. In the West

Indies practically the whole of the captured islands were recaptured by the French ; and at the close of three years of war Pitt had expended many millions of money, and had nothing to show for it whatever.

By great exertions and appalling sacrifice of life the lost ground in the West Indies was recovered by a rabble of young soldiers, who died like flies as soon as the campaign was over ; and once again we were left without an army. The climax came in 1797 when the Navy mutinied, owing to the small pay and ill-treatment meted out to it ; and it was thought safer, when matters were set right, to raise the pay of the Army also. Now at last there appeared a man who began to set things in order. The Duke of York, second son of King George III, took the post of Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards ; reorganised, or rather created, a competent staff at head-quarters, set his face steadily against Pitt's vile methods of raising recruits, and restored the discipline of the Army. In 1799 the declining fortunes of France and the successes of a new coalition against her stimulated Pitt to find some new method of recruiting the Army. He resolved to turn to the Militia as a training ground for the regular troops ; and the Duke of York insisted that the soldiers so raised should be formed into second battalions for existing regiments

instead of being framed into new corps. Thirty-six thousand of them were hurried off to Holland without clothing, supplies or transport, and after three or four barren victories and one serious reverse, were thankful to return again under a capitulation. They had been required to do impossibilities and had failed. In the following year the same men, much improved in discipline, were kept idle when they ought to have been fighting as allies with the Austrians in Italy ; and thus Napoleon was enabled to win the victory of Marengo, which made his fortune as First Consul, and allowed him to trouble Europe for another fifteen years. However in 1801 England at last restored her reputation a little by a brilliant campaign in Egypt and the capture of the French army in that country. To all intents this was our one solid success in nine years of fighting. Never was there more gross mismanagement of a war by any Minister.

After a short truce, war broke out again in 1803. Pitt was not then in power, but was the patron and more or less the adviser of Addington's weak administration. That was the period when Napoleon made great and serious preparations for an invasion of England ; and it was necessary to take unprecedented measures for home defence. Instead of thinking out some plan for training the entire manhood of the nation to arms, expanding the

Militia and compelling every man to serve in it, Addington and his colleagues devised a system which was one long tissue of absurdities. They began by instituting a ballot for fifty thousand Militia, but permitted the ballotted men to provide substitutes instead of serving in person. The price of substitutes soon rose to £30, ten times the amount of the bounty offered to recruits for the Regular Army; and as a natural consequence all the men who should have enlisted in the Army were drawn into the Militia, while the men who should have served in the Militia did not serve at all. Having failed to raise fifty thousand Militia, Ministers asked for twenty-five thousand more on the same terms, which raised the price of substitutes still higher. They then asked for corps of Volunteers upon very favourable conditions, and then ordained that fifty thousand more men should be raised by ballot, once again with substitution permitted, and should be formed into second battalions to the Regular Army. They next passed an Act compelling all able-bodied men to undergo compulsory training, unless a certain proportion came forward as Volunteers upon less favourable terms than those offered to the first Volunteers. Thus there were three different kinds of ballotted men and two different kinds of Volunteers. The result was that recruiting for the Regular Army was killed, at great expense,

while the whole of the levies were failures; and the only reason was that the Government had not the courage to insist upon the country's undoubted right to the service of every able-bodied citizen for her defence.

Addington was swept out of office; and Pitt came in again. He brought in a bill to form a new army of Reserve, which was an utter failure; and he then fell back on the old expedient of offering a bounty to Militiamen to enlist in the Regulars. In this way, which was faithfully followed until the close of the war in 1814, he raised some semblance of an Army; but he did not know how to use it, and he died in January, 1806, thinking the cause of Europe hopeless. A Ministry which included most of the ablest men in England was formed upon his death; and they introduced an Act for national training to arms, excellent in principle but not properly worked out in detail, and abolished the Volunteers. This was a step in the right direction, but was taken too late. The Ministry of All the Talents, as it was called, resigned early in 1807; and then at last the War Office passed into the hands of a capable man, Lord Castlereagh. He began by taking forty thousand men from the Militia into the Regular Army, and raising as many —by extremely drastic methods—to refill the empty ranks of the Militia. He then devised a scheme

which unfortunately was not enforced, for making national training a reality ; and finally he established a new Militia called the Local Militia of two hundred thousand men for home defence, keeping the old Militia to furnish recruits for the Regular Army.

Thus for the first time in our history there was a Regular Army of from forty to fifty thousand men, fit to go anywhere and do anything, together with the means of refilling their ranks as fast as they were depleted by active service.

The number was small but, properly employed, it could be of great use. In 1807 Napoleon had shamelessly and treacherously invaded Spain and Portugal. In 1808 the people of both countries rose against the invaders, and England's one army was sent to support them. I told you in my first lecture that a campaign was like a picnic ; but our European campaigns of any importance had hitherto been confined to the cockpits, where food was abundant and wars so frequent that contractors could always be found to look to the food-supply. The Peninsula is a very different country, comprehending a few fertile districts only together with a vast deal of barren mountain—a country, according to a well-known saying, where small armies were beaten and large armies were starved. The French armies in Spain were large armies, amounting to three hundred thousand men, and the Spanish

troops, badly led and badly organised, could make no stand against them. How could the British hope with forty thousand men or less to combat three hundred thousand ? In this way. The population of the Peninsula was so bitterly hostile to the invaders that the French could not be said to have any hold of the country, except of such part of it as was actually occupied by their soldiers. It was therefore to the interest of the French, in order to feed their troops as well as to hold down the Spaniards, that their armies should be scattered as much as possible. The very wise and sagacious soldier, Sir Arthur Wellesley, who was charged with the command of our army, reasoned as follows. We have a port of entry and a base of operations at Lisbon, to which we can send by sea everything that we want. Being also masters at sea we can prevent the French from making any use of it ; and they must bring into Spain by land everything that they want. The roads are very bad, so that this in itself will be a heavy task ; and there are so many dangerous defiles to be passed that the Spaniards may always lie in wait to capture French convoys. There is one great advantage for us.

Now as long as we have forty thousand men at Lisbon, the French must always keep rather more in a compact body to watch us, which means that they must collect fifty or sixty thousand men

together instead of leaving them dispersed to hold the country down ; which means in its turn that so long as I remain in their front, there must be Spaniards unsubdued and ready to do mischief to their outlying posts and scattered detachments in their rear. Very well. But what if the French assemble a very large force, and try to overwhelm me once for all ? They cannot take a very large force by any one route, because they live on the country and the country will not support them ; but if they bring sixty thousand against my forty thousand, I can stop them. Twenty-five miles north of Lisbon is ground that can be made so strong that even Portuguese Militia could hold it, under good leadership, especially with my army to back them. Moreover the Portuguese have an ancient law that provides for the desertion of all villages, the driving off of all cattle, and the removal of all grain—in fact the laying waste of their country—before an invader. If then the French advance against me in Portugal, I shall retire before them to my fortified lines, leaving the country a waste behind me. If they attack me, all the better. I shall beat them. If they sit down in front of me, I have no objection. I shall have all the resources of the world behind me at Lisbon, while they will only have a devastated wilderness behind them. They may wait for a time, but they will have to send their troops further and

further afield to scrape together food, and the peasants will cut the throats of all stragglers. Sickness will increase among their soldiers for want of proper nourishment; their numbers will fall lower and lower and lower; and at last sheer starvation will compel them to retreat.

And now, mark how I shall get the better of them. I shall provide my army with the means of carrying victuals with it. The task will be extraordinarily difficult, for the country is rough and the roads so infamous that we cannot use wheeled vehicles; but I shall organise a vast train of twelve to fifteen thousand mules to carry everything that we want on their backs. The French, a body of starving men, will have to hurry their retreat, for they have to pass through a devastated country. We, with our bellies full, shall be able to follow them up and cut off thousands of weakly dispirited men. In time they will reach the fortresses which they hold on the Spanish frontier, and there we must stop, while they go back still further to some fertile district where they will find provisions. But their army will be absolutely ruined for the time, weakened by its losses and demoralised by its sufferings. As I advance I shall establish magazines along the route so that I may keep my army fed, and threaten their fortresses. They will be obliged to revictual these fortresses from time to time, and to do so in presence

of my army they will have to collect once more fifty or sixty thousand men, and leave the country behind them to the mercy of the Spanish guerilla bands. If I can stop them by fighting a general action in a strong position with good hope of success, I shall do so. If I cannot, I shall fall back once more, burning or emptying my magazines, to play the same game again. But the oftener I lead them over the same country, the more it will be exhausted. Their system of living on the country is very wasteful. The brutality of their starving soldiers to the peasantry is driving more and more land out of cultivation; and the time will come when they will be unable to assemble their troops except at harvest, but will be obliged to keep them dispersed all through the winter in order to keep them alive. It will take them three or four weeks to collect, with enormous difficulty, food and transport enough for even a fortnight's campaign, and I shall use those three or four weeks to make a swift and sudden attack upon their fortresses; for having the means of feeding my troops, I can do so. They will be obliged to look on helplessly until I have taken the strong places; and, when at last they advance, they will be unable to retake them, until they have driven me back; and I shall only retire until they have exhausted their provisions, and shall then advance again.

From these fortresses I shall penetrate into Spain to threaten other fortresses, rousing the whole country more than ever against the French ; until at last I compel them to loose their hold upon the south of Spain, and concentrate a really gigantic force against me. I shall then retreat as before to Portugal. They will be unable to keep their gigantic force for long together from want of food ; and I shall begin the whole game all over again ; while their men waste away by tens of thousands from fatigue and hardship and incessant petty attacks of the Spanish guerillas. It is only a question of time before Napoleon is distracted by serious operations outside Spain ; when once he begins to reduce his army in the Peninsula, we shall gradually drive it into France ; and then we shall see how long Frenchmen will allow it to live on their own country as it has lived on Spain. I for my part shall follow it up, paying punctually for everything that I take, and allowing no plunder ; and we shall see which army gets on the better.

There in a nutshell is the history of the Peninsular War. Does it not sound simple after the event ? But think of the sagacity and insight of the man who perceived all these possibilities before the event ; and of the courage and force of character which enabled him to carry his policy into effect. Patience, the great attribute of Marlborough, was

the quality which shone above all others in Wellington. And remember that he had to subdue not only himself to patience, but his army, and the British nation, and the Spanish nation and the Portuguese nation. Following his difficulties through his correspondence one marvels how ever he overcame them. The British Government, let people say what they will, supported him well in the face of great obstacles and in the teeth of bitter resistance from an unscrupulous Opposition; but they gained greatly from Wellington's moral support. Spain and Portugal had practically no government, and such authority as existed was to a great extent distributed among fools and knaves. In truth Wellington really administered the government of Portugal for four years, besides commanding the British and Portuguese armies in the field. Never allow yourselves to be abridged of your pride in Wellington by petty detractors, British or foreign. German and French writers, for some strange reason, unite to decry him as a commander. Do not listen to them. Not one of them knows anything of any of his campaigns except that of Waterloo. He was a very great commander in every way, and beyond all doubt (at least such is my opinion) the very greatest of his time upon the actual field of battle. He was not a genial character. He had none of Marlborough's irresistible charm, which made even

the privates call him Corporal John. He was never loved by man nor woman, nor by any but children not his own. By self-imposed discipline—as I believe—rather than by nature he was cold, hard, unsympathetic, and inclined to account the individual man as nothing in comparison with the sanctity of a principle. Hence he broke the heart of more than one good officer who had served him well. But he was incapable of anything common or mean ; he was as hard to himself as to the humblest of his subordinates ; and his conception of duty to Sovereign and Country was so high, and at the same time so spontaneous and natural, that his must always remain the standard by which our public men will be measured. No ! if any one ever presumes to hint to you that Wellington was not a great man, you may ask him if a small man could constrain three nations for four years to patience, and raise the standard of public duty for ever in his own country. This is the centenary of his greatest campaign and most brilliant military achievement ; but long after they are forgotten men will repeat his saying "The King's Government must be carried on."

After the twenty-three years of fighting concluded at Waterloo people imagined that wars would cease. There was much social and commercial distress in England ; and as usual the British mind fastened itself upon the reduction of the Army as

the remedy for all evils. There arose also a political sect which preached the inimitably absurd doctrine that Free Trade would bring about universal peace. The military and naval establishments were cut down to a dangerously low figure ; and all the organisation, which Wellington had created for the feeding of an army, was allowed to decay. At last in 1854 came the war in the Crimea; and there was a repetition of all that had happened in 1792. A small number of very fine regiments was with difficulty scraped together, and sent to the East with no very definite idea as to what they should do, and therefore necessarily without preparation of any kind. Eventually the troops were landed in the Crimea and marched upon Sevastopol. They fought a few magnificent actions, and perished of cold, want and exposure within ten miles of the sea, of which we had absolute command. It was therefore necessary to improvise a new army by the old expedients of bounties, hiring foreign mercenaries, and so forth. Hundreds of boys were sent out to die after the old fashion ; and the Militia were employed, with their own consent, to take over part of the Mediterranean garrisons, and to release the regular troops there for active service. By dint of extravagant expenditure an efficient army was formed within the space of two years, just in time to witness the conclusion of peace.

That was our last European war. It woke us

up a little ; and we were still further roused by the triumph of the Germans over the French in 1870. We took our army more or less in hand, improved the organisation by substituting regiments of two battalions for regiments of one battalion, and introduced a system of enlisting men not for twenty-one years with the colours, but for seven with the colours and five in the Reserve. The system worked badly at first, when we had to provide troops for small colonial expeditions ; but the faults were gradually amended ; and the organisation stood the test fairly well in 1899 and 1900 in South Africa. We can now send 150,000 men abroad perfectly equipped, which is more than we could ever do before ; but other nations count their armies by millions, and in reality we are as far behindhand as ever we were. We have no means of replacing those 150,000 within six months, which would be necessary in case of a great war ; much less have we means of expanding their numbers to twice 150,000 and keeping their ranks filled ; and we have no efficient force of any strength, not even the old Militia, for home defence, while our 150,000 are abroad. Do not think that I am "talking politics." I am only stating plain facts. I cannot discuss, nor even propound, the questions which these facts suggest ; but I cannot avoid the assertion of the facts themselves, for they are essential to our understanding of our subject—they are indeed the pith of British military history.

LECTURE III

BRITISH COLONIAL CAMPAIGNS

I PROPOSE in my present lecture to deal with our colonial campaigns at large. You will recognise at once that a colonial campaign differs from other campaigns in one essential point. One does not attempt to form colonies in any but an empty or comparatively empty country, first because in any other there is no room for colonists, and secondly because a numerous native population may be subdued but cannot be displaced. It is therefore imperative that the indigenous inhabitants of a country, whither settlers propose to emigrate, shall be few; and it is practically as imperative that, unless their numbers are so scanty as to be negligible, they shall be of inferior civilisation, so that they may not be able to fight the settlers on equal terms. Now what do inferiority of civilisation and paucity of numbers mean, militarily speaking, to the civilised invader? They mean, first of all, no roads or at the very best rough tracks, and no bridges over rivers; they mean further rude cultivation and very small stores, if any, of cereal food. This signifies in its turn that the great problem of the campaign will be how to feed your force in the field, or as we now call it the problem of transport (for the campaign will be more than ever a

picnic) and of supply. In the matter of actual combat the uncivilised enemy will have the advantage certainly of perfect adaptation to the climate, intimate knowledge of the country, and generally of stronger physical endurance, greater rapidity of movement, and decided superiority in eyesight and hearing. His disadvantages will be inferior organisation, inferior armament, and inexperience of the need for providing a great multitude with food at a distance from its provision-grounds. Speaking generally the sound principle of savage warfare is this—to equip yourself with a good service for transport and supply, march up to your enemy, sit down and fortify yourself in a strong position. Your enemy must then do one of three things: attack you, in which case he is sure to be defeated; move on; or starve. He is not likely to attempt attack after a lesson or two, and therefore as a rule he will move on. You then move after him and sit down again, destroying or appropriating his provision-grounds and capturing his cattle, as you find opportunity. By this method you must infallibly bring him to submission. It was thus that George Monk subdued the Highlands.

It is not, however, by any means always possible to pursue this policy. Your adversaries may be dwellers in forests, such as the Red Indian; or in wooded mountains, such as the Kaffir and the Carib;

or defended in part by an arid wilderness, as are the Soudanis. Moreover they may be a people of military instincts and organisation, with their own skilful system of tactics, and a sense of honour which prefers death to disgrace. Such were that most gallant race, the Zulus. Or they may be of a magnificent strength and stature with a fanatical contempt for death, as the Dervishes. Or they may combine something of the Zulu with their own very elaborate system of fortification, as the Maoris. Each race and country presents its own peculiar features and problems, which need to be considered and solved upon their merits. But speaking generally the difference between the civilised and uncivilised fighter is this, that the one takes care to carry his food with him, whereas the other does not.

Now what is true of a savage country at the outset usually remains true for some time, indeed for a very long time, after civilised settlement has begun. The supplies of food are small, for a small population cannot grow much produce, and has no occasion to lay in a great store ; roads and means of communication are few and bad ; and there is hardly a bridge to be found. If all the miles of macadamised road existent in the whole of the British Empire at this moment were added together, I doubt if they would equal, or even nearly equal, those of the British Isles alone. Bearing these things in mind, and

remembering that two centuries ago there were very few paved roads in Europe, and not a single macadamised road until less than a century ago, let us look for a time at our colonial Military History.

Our earliest settlements were made in North America and the West Indies; the latter slightly earlier than the former but to all intent contemporaneously; and the Dutch and French were there very nearly as early as we ourselves, at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In North America the settlers naturally established themselves first on the coast, using the great rivers as water-ways to penetrate into the back country. The Dutch in the first instance chose one of the most important of those rivers, building the town of New Amsterdam at the mouth of the Hudson. The French took perhaps the most important of all, the St Lawrence, founding Quebec near its mouth and Montreal a little higher up. Lastly the Spaniards held the south and the mouth of the Mississippi, so far away that they were of small concern either to the French or the English. South of the St Lawrence the English colonists scattered themselves in the course of the seventeenth century along more than a thousand miles of coast from the Kennebec to the Savannah. Quebec itself was captured in 1627 from the French but, in spite of the protests of far-seeing men, was given back under a treaty of peace in 1632. New

Amsterdam was taken from the Dutch in 1664, and retained as New York. In their early days most of these settlements came into hostile collision with the Indians at one time or another, but were able to hold their own, for they had brought with them over the ocean the old English principle that all able-bodied men were liable to service for domestic defence. New York, however, did even better; for that Colony specially cultivated the friendship of the Five Nations—the most formidable of the Indians—for the sake not only of the fur-trade, but of protection against other Indians and dangerous neighbours on the north.

Those dangerous neighbours were of course the French. Their colonies on the St Lawrence were strictly military, the settlers being mostly old soldiers who received their grants of land in reward for past and in consideration of future service; while the government was despotic and centred in a military officer of experience and ability. The younger French settlers were always attracted by the free life of the Indians in the forest; hence every man was a skilful woodman, a good marksman and a trained canoe-man, in fact a better sportsman and warrior than colonist. Moreover they and the Jesuits, who both ministered to their spiritual needs and laboured to convert and rule the Indians, were enterprising and intrepid explorers. They soon

wandered through the whole chain of lakes, found the rivers Illinois and Wisconsin running out of Lake Michigan, and followed them down the whole course of the Mississippi to New Orleans, taking possession of the entire country in the name of Louis XIV. This they accomplished in 1680, five years before the death of King Charles II ; and we ought always to salute the gallant French nation in honour of the brave men who essayed and accomplished this great feat of exploration. From that moment the French conceived the notion of getting behind us along the entire length of the continent, and confining us to the coast, with the power always of coming down upon our settlements from the rear at any convenient opportunity, and driving us into the sea. It is a very general system with the French, which they have attempted in our own time in West Africa. They always explore and they always make maps, being a practical people, and the result is that they always get the better of us in disputes over boundaries. Their strong points in America in the seventeenth century were their unity and enterprise. Their weak points were their numbers (for they did not exceed twelve thousand) and the fact that they raised no great quantity of food.

The English settlers on the other hand were agriculturalists, and each community was distinct, jealous and self-centred. In New York there was

a large trade with the Indians; and the pious Quakers of Pennsylvania and Rhode Island used to finance pirates who at one time nearly swept our East Indian trade off the seas. But for the most part they quietly tilled the soil, or in the north went fishing; nor could any power induce even a few of them to unite their forces against the French. They would invade each other, for they were a most cantankerous people, but would never make a combined effort against the common enemy. New York and New England, being nearest to the French, made endeavours from time to time to drive them out, but always failed owing to provincial jealousies, want of discipline, want of organisation, want of efficient leaders. There are two waterways, broken in places by rapids, which, as you know, lead from New York to the St Lawrence; the one by the Mohawk and Lake Ontario, the other by the Hudson and Lakes George and Champlain; and these waterways were the scene of all the fighting for the mastery of Canada. In 1690 and 1691 New York and New England made a desperate but inefficient attempt to take Quebec. They failed miserably, though New England alone could pit ninety thousand settlers against the French twelve thousand. The French, united and well commanded, took the offensive, broke down the power of the Five Indian Nations —the principal defensive barrier of the English

settlements—and the Colonies were reduced to shrieking to England for help.

Queen Anne sent an expedition to the St Lawrence in 1711, which failed owing to the incompetence of the commander; but none the less at the Peace of Utrecht France ceded to us Nova Scotia. Thereupon the French proceeded to fortify all the commanding points on the lakes (remember that the waterways were the only ways by which an army could be supplied), and established a naval station on Cape Breton to harass British shipping in future wars. This was the celebrated fortress of Louisburg; and the building of it was a very costly mistake. Why? Because it was situated in a barren territory which could raise nothing and support nothing, wherefore Louisburg could only be provisioned from without and from the sea. Without superiority at sea therefore Louisburg must starve; with superiority at sea it was a superfluity. The rival settlers and their Indians continued to raid each other perpetually along their frontiers until the War of the Austrian Succession brought about overt hostilities; and then in 1745 the forces of New England, commanded by a lawyer and with the help of a British squadron, besieged and took Louisburg. This was a brilliant feat for amateurs, though of course the most difficult part of the work was done by British sailors; but upon the peace of

1748 the British Government very wisely restored Louisburg, preferring to keep Madras in the East Indies in its place. On the other hand the British established a military settlement of old soldiers at Halifax.

The French now began seriously to pursue their policy of establishing themselves in rear of the British colonies, by forcibly occupying two British settlements on the Ohio, and building a chain of forts to maintain the communications between these, Lake Erie and Montreal. The Governor of Virginia sent a young officer of Militia, named George Washington, to tell them to go, but was answered that the French had no intention of moving. The Colonies with the greatest difficulty were brought to vote a small sum of money for a force to drive the French out; and Washington advanced again to Ohio, only to be surrounded by superior numbers and forced to surrender. This might, one would have thought, have roused the Colonies; but with the exception of New England, which was burning to capture Canada, one and all showed the completest apathy. The Americans had, and still have, all the modern English indifference to national duty and military preparations. To the enduring shame of the Colonies, therefore, application was made to England for help; and two regiments were sent out under General Braddock, a capable but narrow-minded

officer, who had no idea of military operations except as carried out in a European cock-pit. His difficulties were great, for his march lay for one hundred miles through dense forests, which provided neither forage for animals nor food for men; and, when animals have to carry their own food, they have little strength to carry more. The only chance was to move lightly and rapidly; whereas on the contrary Braddock encumbered himself with waggons which necessitated an advanced party of three hundred axe-men to clear away trees and obstacles. Nor did he make any effort to train his troops to bush-fighting; and hence when caught at a disadvantage by the enemy on the march, they were seized with panic and cut to pieces. An advance of the local forces of New England towards the St Lawrence was also a failure, owing to the usual indiscipline of the Colonial levies, and the entire campaign ended in disaster.

A few more troops were sent from England in the following year, 1756, together with a new general; but he could accomplish little, having inadequate forces and being unable to persuade the Colonists to provide more. The conduct of campaigns by New England lawyers was in fact most wasteful and inefficient. In 1757, as we have seen, Pitt came to the head of affairs; but he had not time to make provision for a more effective management of the

war in America; and all the successes of the year were on the side of the French. At last in 1758 a new commander-in-chief, General Jeffery Amherst, was appointed; the regular soldiers were increased to the number of twenty-six thousand; and Pitt undertook to clothe, equip, feed and arm twenty-five thousand Colonial troops, leaving to the Colonies only the expense of paying them. Louisburg was besieged and taken by Amherst, and the French were driven from the Ohio; but an advance of sixteen thousand men towards the St Lawrence was checked by a disgraceful reverse, owing to the incapacity of the British commander. Amherst took personal command on this side in the following year, leaving Wolfe to attack Quebec; and in 1760 the resistance of the French entirely collapsed. It needed only careful organisation and endless pains in the troublesome work of bringing forward food for the troops to render success certain; and yet the Americans could not do it. Beyond all question there were brains in America fully equal to the business of divining exactly what would be wanted; indeed Benjamin Franklin had to do with the organisation of Braddock's expedition; but there were no disciplined men who could be trusted to do exactly what they were told. The British soldiers were no doubt, to the Colonial mind, helpless and unhandy beyond expression; but they knew how to obey. If told

to do a thing to-day at ten o'clock, they did not wait till to-morrow at three—which is the Colonial way—and it is only by punctuality that a campaign can be even begun. Selfishness, jealousy and indiscipline were the causes why the Americans, notwithstanding their huge superiority in number of population, were unable to conquer the French in Canada without a British army to help them. Had the position of the two nations been reversed, the French would have driven us from Canada in twelve months.

The result of our exertions in behalf of the Colonies is well known. Having delivered them from a dangerous neighbour, we asked them to share with us the burden of Imperial defence. They admitted the justice of the claim, but declined to satisfy it. When we endeavoured to solve the problem by means of the Imperial Parliament, they resented it with furious violence. English politicians, too many of them from factious spite, but a few from higher motives, supported and encouraged them. The question of Imperial defence was lost sight of. There was mismanagement on our side, gross provocation on the side of the Colonists; and the quarrel finally issued in war. The Americans took the offensive and made a dash upon Canada, whence they were with some difficulty repulsed. We recaptured New York; and then, by extraordinary blundering at home, General Burgoyne was ordered

to advance south from Canada upon the supposition that General Howe would advance northward to meet him from New York; instead of which Howe sailed to the Delaware and captured Philadelphia. Burgoyne meanwhile endeavoured to do as he was bidden; but from want of land-transport found that continued progress through the forest was impossible. His only chance was, if he could, to capture one of the enemy's magazines by surprise; and it was the miscarriage of an attempt to do this which first entangled him in serious danger. He plunged deeper and deeper into a circle of enemies, and was surrounded and compelled to surrender; but his campaign was in reality wrecked by the difficulty of transport and supply in a wild country. In one space of twenty miles, for instance, he was obliged to fell trees and build forty bridges over rivers and creeks, with the result that he took precisely twenty days to traverse the distance. Invasion on such terms, when the whole population of a country is hostile, is almost impossible of success. Yet strangely enough the whole object of the movement from north and south along the line of the Hudson was to secure the line of the river, and cut off the colonies to the east from the colonies on the west of it. For the cereal supplies of the American army were on the west bank, and the meat supplies on the east; and to deprive them of either would force them

to fight or to disband themselves. Thus, you see, the question of subsistence was at the root of the whole matter.

The disaster at Saratoga brought the French as allies to the Americans; and it was the supremacy of the French fleet on the coast at a critical moment which decided the issue of the war. There was fighting, and hard fighting, in the southern colonies; but the Americans would never have beaten us without the help of the French. Had they been really in earnest they could have driven us from the country in twelve months, but they were not in earnest. They wanted other people to do their fighting for them, whether they were contending against France in 1757 or England in 1780; and by great good fortune they found such other people ready to their hand. A few noble and patriotic men did indeed their utmost duty to their country; but they were very few. The rest were unwilling to make the sacrifice demanded of them by service in the field and submission to discipline. Hence their Government was driven to cruelty and double-dealing of every kind to force their British prisoners to enter the American ranks, so as to save selfish citizens from risking their worthless skins. In fact when one compares the resistance of the three million Americans in 1776–1781 with that of the few hundred thousand Boers in 1899–1902, it is

impossible to regard the American rebellion with any great respect.

In 1812 we were again embroiled with America chiefly owing to the intrigues of Napoleon, but in great measure also through the hostility of two of the Presidents. As usual, these two officials and their supporters counted upon Napoleon to fight their battles for them, and made no preparations for war, thinking that they would be able to take Canada with ease from us, who had the great Emperor and all his forces upon our hands. They were egregiously undeceived. Their naval officers and sailors acquitted themselves admirably, though their ships were too few to make head against us in the open sea. Their troops were for long beneath contempt, owing to want of training and discipline. We had so much upon our hands that we could spare few soldiers to meet them; but the Americans never succeeded, in spite of greatly superior numbers, in taking Canada; and at last they were glad to make peace without gaining any of the objects for which they had fought, being absolutely exhausted and ruined by our naval blockade. But it is to be noticed that, as usual, transport and supply were the great difficulties on both sides and that, setting aside some raids on our part which were not always successful, the main fighting took place on the waterway of the great lakes, simply because that

was the only quarter in which either side could feed even a small army. In fact it was impossible, for want of decent roads, to bring forward supplies except by water; and success or failure to either party depended wholly upon naval supremacy on the lakes. When we held it we beat the Americans, when the Americans held it they beat us; so that practically this was a naval war albeit fought inland.

Let us pass next to the West Indies. Where islands are concerned, of course naval superiority is essential to every successful campaign, otherwise you cannot bring either troops or stores to the scene of action. The Antilles are for the most part of volcanic formation, mountainous, if a height of three to four thousand feet may be said to make a mountain, rugged, and in the majority of cases covered with forest, cultivation generally being confined to the lower hills and valleys. Situated between the 10th and 23rd degrees of North latitude, they lie well within the Tropic of Cancer; and the climate is consequently such that white men cannot breed and thrive there. Roads in the great majority of the islands are few, and such as there are frequently traverse ground so steep that they are paved and not macadamised, lest the surface should be washed away by the heavy tropical rains. By far the greater number of such roads (I except the island of Barbados) are mere tracks, narrow, rough and unfit for

vehicles. Bridges are even fewer than roads, though the islands with which we are chiefly concerned are furrowed by torrents, which have cut deep ravines and valleys in their rush from the mountains down to the sea. Hence what with forests, streams, hills and valleys as steep as those of the Highlands, it is not easy to move about most of the islands. All labour was formerly done by negro slaves imported from West Africa, whose descendants—now for three generations free—still form the mass of the population. These negroes to a certain extent cultivate provision-grounds for themselves; but the islands are none of them self-supporting in the matter of food; and for full two centuries they have been supplied with flour, maize, salt fish and salt pork from America. Strategically they fall into two groups: the Windward, comprising the chain of islets which runs for some six hundred miles north and westward from Trinidad to St Thomas; and the Leeward, consisting of the far larger islands of Porto Rico, St Domingo, Jamaica and Cuba, which run nearly due west from St Thomas. Everything in the West Indies is windward or leeward, that is to say is considered in respect of its situation towards the south-easterly trade-wind, which in the days of sailing ships was a very important matter. Say, for instance, that the General in Jamaica asked for reinforcements from the General

at Barbados, the most leewardly from the most windwardly of our possessions; the General in Barbados had to think twice before sending them because, though they would probably reach Jamaica in a week, they could not be sure of beating back in three months. In fact no captain in old days would have attempted such a thing, for it would have been quite as speedy and far less exhausting to sail back to England by a circuitous course and make a fresh start for Barbados from thence. So too between any two islands the same question of windward and leeward was equally cogent. Martinique, the French head-quarters in the Windward group, is little over one hundred miles from Barbados, the English head-quarters; but while you may sail from Barbados to Martinique in twelve hours, you will not beat back in less than three or four days.

The Spaniards, as you know, were the first in the West Indies, but they troubled themselves little about the Windward islets, occupying by preference the great islands of Porto Rico, St Domingo, Cuba and Jamaica. We and the French, however, began at much the same time to occupy the islets to windward, which are all of about the size of the Isle of Wight, and we did a good deal of petty squabbling over them. These little places very soon became enormously rich. Sugar, indigo and spices, produced by servile labour, brought in enormous profits;

while incidentally the contract for providing the Spanish islands with slaves—known as the Assiento—which we held for a great many years, was highly lucrative. Even in the reign of Charles II a Jamaican planter with an income of £12,000 a year—worth say £50,000 in these days—was not considered extraordinarily wealthy; and for nearly two centuries the West Indian was the most powerful mercantile interest in the British islands.

With aboriginal inhabitants, or Caribs, we never had any very serious trouble, for they were few in the islands which we occupied; and in fact though, when incited by our European enemies, they gave occasional annoyance, they were never the subject of any serious military expedition until 1772, when a hybrid race, bred of yellow Carib and African negro, both brave and vigorous, became rebellious in St Vincent. There were only fifteen hundred of them, men, women, and children; but it took three thousand soldiers and marines, backed by two or three ships of war, five entire months to force them to submission, so formidable were the difficulties of feeding the troops in the thick forest and deep ravines of the interior. Few horses and mules were bred in the Windward islands, so that all the supplies were carried on the heads of negroes. Had the Caribs, therefore, been a really formidable fighting race, it would have taken us long to conquer

the West Indies. As things were, we imported the negroes, who bred fast and soon outnumbered the aborigines ; and thus we either compelled the Caribs to move, or agreed to let them have some patch of territory for their own. Of course the slaves were not quite an element of safety, and the whole of the West Indies lived in constant dread of a servile war. Hence a little garrison was generally kept by every nation in every island ; and at least one fort was erected, as a rule, for defence of the capital and its harbour against both foreign and domestic enemies, while smaller works covered less important towns.

An expedition to the West Indies therefore meant almost certainly something in the nature of a siege until the fort and town were captured ; and, when that was accomplished, the conquest, so far as white men were concerned, was complete. For in a small island it was inevitable that the capital should be situated by the best harbour ; and, when this harbour was in an invader's hands, he could land as many troops as he wished with ease, while he was also master of all supplies of food, which naturally were stored in the town. The operations, however, though short were sure to be arduous owing to the heat of the climate and the ruggedness of the ground ; and therefore it was important that they should be undertaken in the cool season, that is to say between November and May, in which latter month the heat

and the rains begin to increase and the climate becomes, or at any rate became, unhealthy. The confinement of operations to this season is the more imperative, since between May and October there is always the danger of hurricanes, and the harbours in which a ship can lie with safety during a hurricane in the West Indies are not many. You must remember that a hurricane is not a mere storm—it is a devouring devastation before which no tree and none but the stoutest houses, carefully equipped for resistance, can hope to stand.

Our first serious state-directed expedition to the West Indies was that despatched by Cromwell to St Domingo in 1654. We were not at war with Spain at the time, and the enterprise was simply a piece of piracy; but it was equipped on a great scale, the fleet numbering sixty-five sail and the troops six thousand men. It was intended that the West Indian and American colonies should furnish contingents of soldiers; and, when St Domingo had been taken, to use it as a base of attack against all the Spanish possessions in the South Atlantic. The expedition, from want of experience, was ill-equipped; the men, hastily raised levies, were of poor quality; and the armament did not sail until the end of December, two months too late. The descent upon St Domingo was a disgraceful and disastrous failure; fleet and army quarrelled violently; and the only

result of the enterprise was the bloodless capture of Jamaica, after which fleet and army returned home, leaving a garrison behind them. Yellow fever broke out immediately and the garrison was almost annihilated. In October, 1655, reinforcements arrived, and began at once to die at the rate of twenty men a day. Fresh reinforcements followed in 1656, and in a few months two-thirds of these were dead. At last the sickness abated. An attempt of the Spaniards to recapture the island in 1658 was beaten off, and Jamaica has remained under the English flag ever since.

Here was a warning for all time as to the conduct of expeditions to the West Indies. Care must be taken for good understanding between army and navy; and the fleet must sail from England at latest in October. We shall see how far this warning has been observed. The next important expedition to the West Indies was sent by King William in 1695 to root out the French who had established themselves at the western end of St Domingo, now called Haiti, and who were threatening Jamaica from thence. This armament did not sail till January, three months too late, and consequently did not begin operations till May. In four months over a thousand out of the thirteen hundred soldiers had died; while the quarrels between the naval and military commanders banished all hope of solid success.

The next great tropical expedition undertaken was that of 1740–1 against Carthagena on the Spanish main, but little outside the beat of our West Indian squadrons. The enterprise was prompted by sheer greed of gain ; the troops were young and raw recruits (for of course we had no old soldiers) and numbered six thousand ; American levies to the number of four thousand were sent from Jamaica to join them ; the whole were shamefully ill-equipped ; and finally the armament sailed four months too late. It was exactly the story of St Domingo over again. The military commander died on the voyage, and his successor, a feeble creature, was treated with the greatest contempt by the naval officers. However, the force reached Carthagena, and the troops were landed ; but the General, mistrusting himself and his men, was so slow and dilatory in his movements that he delayed the decisive attack until late in April, and was then repulsed. Sickness, lead and steel had already reduced his force from nine thousand to little over six thousand effectives, and on the night of the defeat the yellow fever fell upon the unhappy army in earnest. In three days—think of this appalling visitation—in three days the effective men had sunk from sixty-six hundred to thirty-two hundred ; and in ten days more only a thousand were fit to be landed against an enemy. Reduced to a mere shadow, the

expedition returned to Jamaica, but the yellow fever went with it; and, within twelve months of the arrival of the original armament in the tropics, its numbers had shrunk from nine thousand to fewer than three hundred fit for duty. At the beginning of 1742 these were joined by a reinforcement of three thousand men. Within a month a thousand of these were sick or dead. A thousand more died before October, and at last the force practically disappeared. Of the four thousand Americans only three hundred lived to return home; of the nine thousand British a bare one in ten survived. This on the whole is the most terrible story that I know in British military history; but perhaps I am led to think so by Smollett's vivid picture of its horrors in *Roderick Random*. I remember that I read that book for the first time when I was an undergraduate at Trinity, little thinking that I should live to proclaim the fact to a Trinity audience. Every one of you ought to read it if you have not already done so, to learn at first hand what was meant by naval and military service in the eighteenth century.

Here was another warning to strengthen the first. But meanwhile the West Indies grew and grew in wealth, and were more and more coveted by all nations. Hence the great William Pitt himself was eager to appropriate as many islands as possible, setting thus a very evil example to his son. At the end of 1758

six battalions were sent out to capture Guadeloupe, which they duly did, being handled with great skill by General Barrington, before the hurricane season began. Three of the six battalions were left there as a garrison, and, before the year was out, about half of them had died. In 1762 Pitt's successor, acting upon his designs, sent eight thousand men to capture the remaining French islands; and, this being accomplished, not without heavy loss from sickness, the remnant of the force joined a detachment of troops under Lord Albemarle in the siege of Havana. Twelve thousand men were employed in this siege, which lasted two months, and was one of the most deadly in which British soldiers were ever engaged. Before its close one brigade of four battalions was reduced to twenty men fit for duty. Over five thousand men were buried in Cuba alone in four months, while hundreds more perished both there and in North America, whither they had been transported in the hope of saving their lives.

Several French islands passed into our possession at the Peace of Paris, all of course demanding garrisons which required to be totally renewed every two years; but Guadeloupe, Martinique and St Lucia were left to the French; and it was in order to gain a safe harbour in St Lucia, commanding the French naval base at Martinique close by, that a descent was made upon it in 1778 by five thousand British

troops from America. The operations were conducted in a masterly fashion both by sea and land; and the capture of the island atoned in some measure for that of sundry British islands by the French. But the virulence of yellow fever was everywhere terrible; and the usual mortality was heightened in 1780 by a hurricane of peculiar violence. In Barbados four thousand human beings, nine thousand cattle and horses, and smaller stock without number were destroyed in a few hours. Still, by laying the forest flat and thus destroying the harbour for mosquitoes, the hurricane abated the sickness in St Lucia.

And now we come to the war of the French Revolution, when Pitt thought to compel France to submission by taking all her colonies and depriving her of all colonial produce, whether as a luxury or as a source of revenue. France had but three islands to windward, Martinique, Guadeloupe and St Lucia and to leeward the western end of St Domingo, called Haiti; but all were flourishing settlements; and Haiti was considered the richest possession in the world, its produce being valued at four millions annually. All three had been shaken, and Haiti half-ruined, by the doctrines of the National Assembly, which had not only abolished slavery, but preached the doctrine of equality among all men to such effect that the negroes had risen and

either massacred or driven out two-thirds of the whites. In the hope of restoring order and regaining their wealth the remainder of the whites invited the General at Jamaica to occupy their territory, an offer at which that officer grasped eagerly, knowing by reputation the wealth of the place. Shortly afterwards at the end of 1793, but two months too late, Pitt sent seven thousand troops under General Grey and a fleet under Sir John Jervis, better known as Lord St Vincent, to capture the French Windward islands. The two commanders were excellent men in their professions, and on affectionate terms with each other. Their operations prospered. The three islands were taken after two months hard work; and then with the coming of the unhealthy season the men began to die. Emissaries, one of them a West Indian mulatto of great energy and ability, arrived from France with arms and reinforcements, proclaimed the equality of all men, and stirred up the negroes to root the English out. The negroes responded; and not in the French islands only, but in all that had ever been French, they rose in insurrection against the whites. Meanwhile Pitt had sent the British regiments no reinforcements, no stores, no clothing; and they had now a most formidable task before them. It was no longer a case of meeting white men of like weakness and disabilities with themselves, but of contending with

black men to whom the climate was favourable and who knew every inch of the country.

By the end of the year 1794 five out of seven thousand of Grey's men had died, and Guadeloupe had been recaptured by the French. By the summer of 1795 St Lucia had also been recaptured; and the British even in their own islands of St Vincent and Grenada had been dispossessed of all but the two forts and capitals. Scattered regiments of boys sent out by Pitt sufficed only to fill the graveyards, for they could not stand the active work of the campaign; and at last Pitt was obliged to despatch a fresh army of seventeen thousand men to recover the lost ground. The expedition, owing to the usual blundering, started too late, and the troops were of the worst quality, young, untrained and of poor physique. However, thanks to their commander, Sir Ralph Abercromby, they managed to recapture the lost islands, which by that time had been reduced to desolation by the insurgent negroes; and then of course they died like flies. Meanwhile ever since 1793 Haiti had swallowed up more and more troops, the black insurgents opposing the British most gallantly but proving far less deadly than the yellow fever. Year after year reinforcements arrived to complete the work of conquest, and year after year the army was reduced to a shadow before it could accomplish its task. But Pitt, still

insatiable, sent Abercromby out a second time in 1797 to capture Trinidad and Porto Rico, which latter island by great good fortune was too strong for him. It was not until 1798 that the bickering over these miserable islands ceased, and even then by no fault of Pitt's. It was a military officer who decided on his own responsibility to evacuate Haiti, against the wishes of the Government, but none too soon. By that time Pitt's military policy, so called, had cost us 100,000 men, but had not contributed in the slightest degree to check the aggression of Revolutionary France.

After this awful lesson the Government began to train black soldiers to take the place of white in future West Indian expeditions; while the white garrisons were largely composed of foreigners and battalions of convicts. But while struggling to create an army at home by the mistaken methods which I have already described to you, Addington opened the second part of the war by capturing St Lucia, Tobago and Dutch Guiana, thus multiplying unhealthy stations which ate steadily into our own strength without diminishing that of the enemy. Ultimately a series of expeditions, exceedingly well managed, swept the whole of the West Indies, excepting the Spanish, into our net, and put an end to all warfare in that quarter for the remainder of the war. By the peace of 1814 Martinique and

Guadeloupe were restored to France, but were recaptured by us in 1815 during the Hundred Days, and then finally given back to be captured no more. The sequel is melancholy enough. For about a quarter of a century after Waterloo our miserable pittance of an army was hidden away in great measure in the Islands; and then suddenly the British nation in one of those fits of conscientiousness to which it is occasionally subject, decided practically to destroy these possessions by abolishing slavery and repealing the duties which protected their produce. The abolition of slavery was no doubt a good thing, but as it extended at first to the English islands only, its immediate effect was to give a tremendous impulse to the slave trade, with all its horrors, in the French, Dutch and Spanish islands. To all intent it penalised our own islands to the advantage of the Spanish islands, and favoured our few negroes to the prejudice of ten times their number of others. This evil after some years passed away, as the abolition of slavery was accepted by other countries; but the West Indies have never recovered from the shock of the double blow. Moreover, apart from these two legislative enactments, Pitt's policy of ruining France by taking her colonies has resulted in the ruin of the colonies for the benefit of France. For, being deprived of all colonial produce, French men of science sought out the means

of growing some of that produce in France itself; and hence arose the manufacture of sugar from the root of the beet, and an immense industry not in France only but all over Europe, which drives the best West Indian sugar out of the market. So little can even great men foresee the consequences of their actions.

Thus the West Indies have fallen for ever from their high estate; and it is only by an actual visit to them that we can divine what they once were. Ruined forts, ruined barracks, ruined store-houses, old guns slowly mouldering away, pyramids of round shot so welded together by rust that they cannot be moved—these are the more visible tokens of past greatness. But a searching enquirer will turn his steps to the desolate graveyards, and tearing his way through rank herbage and tropical scrub will approach the crumbling head-stones, and there he may read—or at least I could read thirty years ago—what a visitation of yellow fever meant in the old days. Field-officers, captains, lieutenants, ensigns, sergeants, corporals, drummers, rank and file of battalion after battalion lie there in row upon row, as if on parade, while the land-crabs hurry from grave to grave, and deadly snakes lie coiled upon the heaps of crumbling stones which once were monuments. I know no more melancholy sight than this. How many British soldiers and sailors lie in

these and other unknown graves in the Caribbean Islands? I know not; but the lowest figure that I should suggest would be three hundred thousand, and the highest perhaps half a million. And the pity of it is that the value of the islands disappeared just when the means of economising life began to be perfected. The formation of negro regiments, though bitterly opposed by the planters, who dreaded the slightest emergence of the black race from the status of servitude, was a great and courageous act of statesmanship—courageous because formerly the West Indian interest could muster a solid phalanx of eighty votes in the House of Commons, and was thus able to overset a Government. Now too in these later days yellow fever has yielded up its secrets to science, and can be disarmed of its terrors. But it is too late. No one cares for the West Indies nowadays. No one remembers that at one time Cuba was deemed more valuable than Madras. The whole of the Antilles are now entrusted to the protection of one white battalion, one black battalion, and two companies of artillery; and the great bulk of these men are kept there not for the sake of the once wealthy sugar islands, but to ensure the safety of the naval station of Bermuda. One could contemplate such a change with equanimity but for the recollection of perhaps half a million lives sacrificed to no purpose.

I turn now to the seat of the most difficult of all of our colonial wars, South Africa; the most difficult because it is of vast extent, inhabited by warlike natives for the most part, and without waterways. Our first attack upon it in 1795, when we were opposed by Dutch troops and Boers only, is remarkable as an example of a campaign conducted by three thousand white soldiers without any transport whatever, and without even gun-teams. The distance from the base, Simonstown, to the objective, Capetown, was only twelve miles, nearly all through deep sand; but the enemy were as strong as the invaders; and, when everything has to be dragged by white men's arms or carried upon white men's backs, the difficulties of movement are so great—especially if the march be opposed at every step—as to be almost insuperable. However, a large proportion of the force was turned into beasts of burden, and their numbers were supplemented by bluejackets and marines; the general having wisely decided that both Services should share alike in the drudgery of transport and in the more congenial work of fighting. Thus Capetown, by a tremendous effort, was taken for the first time. When we attacked it again in 1806 we disembarked at a different point; and the enemy's general was obliging enough to come out to meet us at once, and to be beaten. Thus our force, about six thousand strong,

was enabled to victual itself from the fleet at the end of the first day's advance, and to march into Capetown at the end of the second.

Since then we have fought many wars in South Africa against both natives and Dutch colonists; and in all of them the main difficulty has been that of feeding the troops. There is of course the country-transport which is familiar to us—the huge tilted waggons with their eight yoke of oxen, each in the charge of two skilled natives—of which we heard so much twelve years ago. Of its kind it is good. But such large vehicles and teams are very unwieldy; they must be left in charge of natives who cannot be trusted (and small blame to them) not to run away in moments of danger; and lastly the ox, though patient, plucky and persevering to an uncommon degree, has his defects as a draft animal. He is very slow and he must not be hurried; he needs time to chew the cud after feeding; and he cannot work with the full power of the sun beating upon his back. In fact he has his times and seasons which must be carefully observed, or he will die; and he is sensitive not only to sun, but also to cold and wet. The enemy, being fully aware of his limitations, can foresee their effect upon the movements of the force opposed to them, and can lay their plans accordingly. Another disadvantage to European troops in South Africa is that European horses do not naturally take to

South African pasture, and that there are poisonous plants to be found in it which native horses have learned to avoid, but which European horses will innocently devour. Hence forage becomes a great difficulty also ; and on the veldt there is the further drawback that no wood for fuel exists. As in most new lands, the roads are mere tracks, and all the innumerable rivers must be crossed by fords, for there are few bridges ; while the extent of the territory that may be covered by military operations in so vast a continent is appalling.

In one of our earliest Kaffir wars—that of 1835—Sir Harry Smith described himself as having only twelve hundred men, eight hundred horses and four guns, with which to act in a theatre of war of four thousand square miles ; and he added, "It takes just two hours for a commissariat train to arrive, from the moving off of the first waggon to the arrival of the last, when the road is good. When the column is stretched out along the road it looks as if each soldier had a waggon to himself at least." Yet on one occasion with a small force he marched eighty-four miles in three days ; and he covered nearly two hundred and twenty miles in a rugged and mountainous country, much broken by deep rivers, in seven days and a half. In the more serious war of 1850–53 the hostile tribes could not put into the field more than three thousand fighting men ; but by betaking themselves to their

fastnesses of mountain and forest they prolonged their resistance for nearly three years. The British soldier was at every disadvantage in bush-fighting, and the Kaffirs were far too cunning to encounter him in the open; yet by dint of hard work and perseverance this brave and wary enemy was at last worn down. He might have been subdued much earlier but for the constant and insane reductions of the Army ever since Waterloo. It is actually a fact that at this time the military power of England was strained almost to breaking point by three thousand naked savages.

The next war—that of 1877—came at a time when our Army, owing to the recent introduction of short service, was in a state of transition, and taught us a very severe lesson. We were engaged in war with the Zulus, a very formidable tribe, which had been organised into a great military power by a chief who, in his own way, was a genius. One of his armies came upon a British force of something over a thousand troops at a disadvantage, and after a desperate fight destroyed them almost to a man. But for the determined resistance of a small post of eighty or ninety men at a ford of the Tugela, the Zulus would probably have overrun Natal to the sea, and extinguished the white inhabitants of that Colony. There was great agitation in England, and several battalions were hurried out to the Cape with

no special regard to their condition or quality. It had been forgotten that the old long-service-soldier had become extinct; and that the old single-battalion-regiments were also in course of extinction, to give place to regiments of two battalions, whereof one was always to be at home and the other abroad. The Army and the nation had not taken kindly to the change; and the immediate result was that the battalions at home had become merely assemblies of boys who, as soon as they approached manhood, were drafted off to feed the battalions abroad. Some of these groups of boys, raw and half-trained, were shipped out to South Africa in the expectation that they would be as strong and as steady as the old battalions composed of men who counted ten to twenty years' service. Of course they were not. They were very sickly, very ill-disciplined, and very far from well-conducted. However, the war was ended, and the power of the Zulus was broken without further serious mishap; and we learned by this experience the lesson that a force of seasoned soldiers must at all times be held ready for what is called the police-work of the Empire.

Our last experience of war in South Africa is too recent for me to presume to say much about it, except that in many respects it bore a singular resemblance to the American War of Independence. The operations of the latter war embraced at least eleven

hundred miles of coast-line, as the crow flies, and in places penetrated inland as far as a hundred and fifty miles from the sea. Only facilities of water-carriage enabled armies to be moved at all over this vast tract; and it was rare for bodies even of ten thousand men to remain for long united. The theatre of war in South Africa was quite as vast. Our two principal bases of operations were nearly a thousand miles apart—as far, say, as Antwerp is from Lisbon, with the enemy's capital situated at Warsaw. But for the existence of a few railways the conquest of this enormous tract might have taken thirty years, for there are no waterways and the country produces little wheat. As things were, it was accomplished more or less in three; and a force of three to four hundred thousand men was fed with a regularity highly creditable to the officers responsible for that duty. But the expense was terrific; and although it was possible by great exertions to bring up food for the men, there were moments when it was impossible to provide sufficient forage for the animals. Hence the waste of horses in the cavalry and artillery was enormous, for they could not live on the African pasture as did the horses of the enemy. In fact a community with a more or less empty continent at its back can, with good management, prolong resistance for an almost indefinite time; for the chances are that the invader will be more quickly exhausted

than the invaded, while the former is always subject to troubles and diversions at home which may weaken him at a critical moment. That is the secret of the power of Russia and of the United States. It is impossible to hurt them seriously, for the further you penetrate into their country the weaker you are. Little countries, such as our own, may be pierced to the heart at the first thrust. Space in fact means time where war is concerned; and time is the most powerful of all allies. The Americans themselves discovered that when they invaded Canada in 1812.

There is another description of colonial war of which we have had experience, and which from the extreme peculiarity of the country and people deserves special notice. I speak of New Zealand. Roughly speaking the two main islands of New Zealand exactly correspond to Italy in our own hemisphere; and if you suppose the sea to close round the northern frontier of the Alps and to cut the peninsula in two by washing a channel through it somewhere about Rome, you will find the actual shape of New Zealand very closely reproduced. Both countries consist of a backbone of volcanic mountains, with a broad margin to east and a narrow margin to west; and in each there is a wide fertile plain made up of débris washed down from the mountains and furrowed by rivers flowing from the

glaciers. This great plain, however, is in the south island of New Zealand; and all of our wars were in the north island, corresponding in the southern hemisphere to the southern portion of Italy. The north island, which contains several active volcanoes, is for the most part mountainous and was to a vast extent covered with dense forest, with a strong undergrowth of vines—known as supple-jacks—and of fern, very like our own bracken, which grows higher than a man's head. The inhabitants were themselves invaders from the North Pacific, or possibly from some part of the American continent, and, according to their own traditions, must have occupied the country at about the time of our own Norman Conquest. They were called, as of course you know, by the name of Maoris, and were split up into a number of tribes which passed their time in continual warfare with each other, and hence possessed some degree of military organisation. Their weapons and tools were made of stone, the best of them of jade. With such tools they had skill to build canoes and art to ornament both prow and paddle with not unbeautiful carving. They were cannibals, for the simple reason that they could get no other meat; for until the white man came there were no four-footed creatures in the two islands—nothing but birds. They caught and dried fish, however, and had little provision-grounds of potatoes.

But their chief business, as I have said, was fighting ; and they were a fine athletic and high-spirited race. For the rest they had a natural gift of fortification. They needed no great talent to select good positions in so hilly a country where natural strongholds abound ; but they showed great skill in throwing up tiers of earth-works and erecting stockades of trees a foot in diameter, tightly bound together with supple-jacks.

The first white men came to them in the form of whaling skippers, who initiated them into the use of fire-arms, and sold such weapons as they could spare to one or two chiefs. The remaining tribes soon discovered that, if they were to escape extermination, they must obtain fire-arms also ; and thus there grew up a large trade in arms and ammunition for which the Maoris paid in native flax—*phormium tenax*—laboriously scraped with shells till only the tough fibre was left, and of supreme excellence from this careful method of curing. Two-barrelled fowling pieces—*tuparas* as they called them—were the favourite weapon, and the Maoris soon became expert in their use ; adding thereupon rifle-pits and covered trenches to their fortifications to meet attack with the new weapon. Incidentally this natural craze for fire-arms materially injured the race, for, in order to scrape flax enough to pay for them, the whole tribe was obliged to come down

from the hill-tops and live by the swamps where the *phormium tenax* grows and abounds.

How we came into collision with the Maoris, who had frequently received white men—deserting sailors and such like—into their tribes with much friendliness, is not a pretty story ; being only one of the many variations on the old theme of the white man's greed for the black man's property. Of course it was necessary to send troops out ; and our commanders, hearing of the fortifications or *pas* erected by the Maoris, thought that such works could not have been thrown up except to defend something, and that it would be desirable to capture them. They therefore brought up a gun or two with infinite labour, and after firing a certain number of rounds, let loose their assaulting columns to the attack. Now as a matter of fact the Maoris built their *pas* upon no such principle ; and the loss of a *pa* was nothing to them so long as no life was lost with it. They therefore continued to build *pas* in the hope that the white men would ram their heads against them ; and they did so with considerable cunning, erecting their first *pa* close to the edge of the forest, retiring from that to a second further within the woods, so as to lure the English deeper and deeper into disadvantageous ground, and from that in turn to a third. By the time the third was reached the English were unable to bring their food any further,

and, having lost heavily in their assaults, were fain to retire and await reinforcements.

The chief difficulty, as in all savage campaigns, lay of course in transport and supply. There were no roads or bridges, and few animals, whether horses, mules or cattle ; but as all the settlements were on the sea, the Maoris had built their *pas* in the vicinity, so as to be ready to attack the whites at any moment. Still, even when the difficulty of transport and supply was overcome, our commanders were greatly puzzled how to injure the Maoris. So powerfully were the tree-trunks of a stockade laced together, that even when broken by a shot they did not fall, but remained suspended, a nasty if not impossible obstacle, by the binders of supple-jack. Thus assaults were always costly, and somehow the Maori garrison always contrived to escape. Again and again a *pa* was surrounded, but there was always a ravine or a watercourse by which the Maoris slipped away ; and when the British column, maddened by heavy losses, broke into the earth-works, it was to find no one there. Once two British columns stormed a *pa*, enduring heavy fire until they reached the summit, when the Maoris dived down into their subterranean galleries. The British soldiers, rushing in from opposite sides, met at the top, and poured a staggering volley into each other, whereupon up came the Maoris from underground, and sent the

assailants flying down again in panic. Altogether the problem of the *pa* seemed to be insoluble, for the galleries and rifle-pits of the Maoris were so cunningly constructed that a bombardment inflicted only trifling damage on them. Critics at a distance wrote that every success (for such the capture of a *pa* was deemed to be) should be followed by a rapid advance into the forest. But deep ravines and gullies covered either with a network of supple-jacks, or with fallen logs and trees hidden in bracken six or seven feet high, is not ground over which men can advance rapidly. I know it because I have tried it; and the unhappy soldiers, who had also tried it, waxed furious over the ignorant presumption of those who talked such nonsense.

At last it occurred to a British officer that the Maoris wished their *pas* to be assaulted, and that they considered it a victory when several scores of British fell in an attack upon a worthless stronghold, while the defenders quietly retired with at most two or three casualties. And this was the fact. Having grasped this truth the officer determined not to attack them; but marched up to the vicinity of a *pa*, sat down in front of it, and entrenched himself and his guns before it. This did not suit the Maoris at all. They saw that they would be obliged to go back sooner or later, without the satisfaction of killing fifty or sixty of the enemy, and they did not

see where the process might end. In desperation they attempted several attacks against the English earth-works, but were repulsed with heavy loss, and were fain to draw back to another *pa* further within the forest. The British followed, and went through the same performance again, with the same result. In a few weeks these particular Maoris gave in, for they saw no prospect of emerging from the forest again; and though they might have kept themselves alive on fern-root, they knew that their warriors would soon lose all physical strength upon such a diet. The Maori wars lasted in one way or another for nearly twenty years in a desultory fashion, partly owing to mismanagement, partly, I fear, because so many contractors in the colonial towns made money out of them that people were unwilling to let them come to an end. When the Imperial troops and money were withdrawn, and the colonists were left to finish the job for themselves, the trouble with the Maoris soon ceased.

Lastly we come to those expeditions which even in these days tend to be most dangerous and costly, I mean those to such fever-stricken coasts as the Gold Coast and the Delta of the Congo, where all supplies and stores must be carried on the heads of men and women, and where even the strictest care may fail to avert deadly sickness. Twice within forty years has a British force marched to Coomassie;

but the wise tendency nowadays is to entrust such work almost exclusively to native troops who do not suffer from the climate. The number of these troops has increased enormously of late years with the extension of our rule in Africa; and we are accustomed to treat the fact as a matter of course, without a thought for the man who has made these foreign levies what they are, and without whom they are nothing—the British officer.

I have sketched for you very briefly the rise of the Empire, and now at the close of this third lecture I am going to say a word for the man who has had the chief share in winning it—the British regimental officer. It is the fashion in some circles to belittle him; and the press, in the plenitude of its ignorance, took occasion during the South African War to cover him with vulgar abuse, reproaching him for his ignorance of his profession and various other shortcomings. As a matter of fact he was the one man in South Africa who understood his business, and it was he who brought the war to a successful conclusion. In these days of democracy, so-called, it is common to vituperate, concurrently with the officer, the English public schools where he obtained his education. Neither officers nor public schools make any reply to such criticisms; and they are quite right, for the British Empire is a sufficient reply to the critics, who are fonder of framing theories than

of studying hard facts. I am not saying that our public schools are perfect, for in many respects they seem to me very faulty ; nor shall I contend that the men who spring from them are, in the ordinary sense of the term, educated, for they are not. The German *gymnasium* and French Lycée undoubtedly produce men who are better schooled to the study of books, and more amply filled with a certain description of facts. But at any rate the pupils from our public schools become men who, after a certain amount of military training, do not shrink from command, and are willing to take responsibility. In brief, they are formed in character if not cultivated in intellect ; they are not ignorant of men, whatever they may be of books ; and they are willing to undertake the government of men, not from mere lust of power, but from instinctive delight in the task.

It is curious how often people complain of the ignorance and narrowness of young officers, saying that they can think of nothing outside their regiments, unless it be polo or some other game in which the regiment is interested. No doubt it is better for men of any profession to know something, and the more the better, of subjects outside that profession ; and yet what could more profitably occupy an officer's thoughts than the men and horses under his charge ? Military routine can have no doubt a somewhat straitening and deadening

effect upon officers, even as academic routine may injuriously affect the minds of schoolmasters and professors ; and no doubt there are officers who chafe under it. But the majority find more than sufficient interest in the study of their men, in the selection of the promising for promotion, the encouragement of the good, the improvement, suppression and elimination of the bad, the bringing on of the backward, and above all in honest endeavour to enter into the *thoughts* of their men—a task so difficult that not one in ten thousand succeeds in mastering it. For they know that it is their business to lead men and not drive them to discipline, and to inspire such confidence between commanded and commander that even in the most desperate situation he may be able to say, *I can depend upon my men.*

But even those who tire of military routine in time of peace change their opinion when they go upon active service. In England they cannot see why all kinds of tiresome details should not be left to the sergeants, but in the field they soon discover that the men will listen to and trust no one but an officer. The non-commissioned officer does not suffice for them. He may be a veteran of eighteen years' service ; but the men will follow a commissioned boy of eighteen fresh from Eton infinitely more readily than they will the non-commissioned veteran. It is a very remarkable fact, and to those

who hold that all men are equal it is extremely unpalatable; but a fact beyond question it is, and not difficult of explanation. Men who by the fortune of their birth are exempted from the bitterness of the struggle for existence, trust their fellows because they have no reason to dread their competition; men who have been brought up in the thick of the fight with none but themselves to help them, see a possible competitor—it may be even a dangerous enemy—in every neighbour, and trust no one.

Yet active service is by no means necessary to cure the officer who is bored with military service at home. Send him away to some outlandish corner of the Empire, and entrust him with the training and command of a few hundred black soldiers, and he will find exile, hardship and discomfort more congenial to him in such company than the softest of lives at home. He realises that everything, so far as those few hundred men are concerned, depends upon himself; and he delights in the sensation. There are hundreds of such officers in remote places quietly doing what some consider the dirty work, but what they themselves know to be the most honourable work, of the Empire. The officers of the Indian Army are in precisely the same case. Few of us realise how much we owe to them, and to how great an extent the Empire is dependent upon them. Operatives in our huge over-grown towns, who exhaust

themselves in condemnation of everything military, never reflect that, but for this handful of officers, their comrades of the Indian Army, and the disciplined men, Indian too, but above all British, who serve under them, millions of themselves who subsist upon our trade with India would be in a state of starvation. Happily the officers, and therefore the men who serve under them, do their duty patiently and quietly without regarding the volumes of chatter which flow unceasingly from the north country; for they know that empires are won and governed not by talk but by action.

This, I think, is a thing that we should all do well to remember from time to time. Exaggerated esteem for our Parliamentary institutions has led us to attach too much importance to speeches. Their original purpose was to persuade men to a common course of action; but they have never been very efficacious, and in this country have long been superseded by political organisation or, in plain English, wire-pulling. People have a strange notion that, without much chatter, there can be no liberty. But liberty (whatever liberty may be) is a small thing to a nation compared with discipline; and in fact liberty of any kind is impossible without discipline. If I am to judge of a nation it is useless to tell me of its political institutions, for the best of them will work badly and the worst of them well according

to the honesty of the men whose business it is to apply them. Let me know what is the state of its discipline, parental, social, national, and with what spirit that discipline is borne. Let me know what are its military institutions, and how far they are supported or ignored; whether the citizens come forward with cheerfulness to fulfil a national duty, or whether they are reckless, self-indulgent shirkers who try to impose on a few the service that is common to all, and take refuge in cant to disguise their cowardice. Then I will tell you without reading a single speech whether the nation is sound at heart or rotten. If the text of all the speeches ever delivered in Parliament were destroyed to-morrow, the world would lose remarkably little. Great men are best studied in their letters and their actions, whether they were great speakers or not; and by no means the worst way of appreciating the actions of very many of them, both civilians and soldiers, is to read military history.

LECTURE IV

BRITISH CAMPAIGNS IN INDIA

To-day I propose to speak to you upon a very great and most intractable subject—British Military History in India. It is difficult to do so without saying something of the history of India itself ; yet the subject is so immense that I must compress the whole of that vast story into one or two sentences.

Let me begin then by reminding you that what we call India is divided into a northern portion, which extends from the Himalayas southward to the Narbada river and the Vindhya Mountains and is called Hindostan ; and a southern portion called the Dekhan which stretches from those boundaries southward to Cape Comorin. This division is less arbitrary than a glance at the map would lead you to suppose ; for between these two huge territories there lies a belt of barren and mountainous country, through which, before the days of railways, there was practically but one passage, famous in Indian military history as the Ajanta Pass. The earliest invaders of whom we have any knowledge came by sea, and landing in the extreme south worked their way from thence to the northern boundary of the Dekhan. The people of the Dekhan still speak the language of these invaders, which is unknown in Hindostan. The next invaders, the Aryans, came

through the passes of Afghanistan from the north-west, bringing with them the religious and social institutions which are known to us as Hinduism, Brahminism and caste, and which still govern the lives of most of the millions who now inhabit Hindostan. They penetrated, however, only into one corner of the Dekhan—the north-west—where the Aryan language, Marathi, betrays their presence.

I pass over the innumerable tides of invasion which swept over Hindostan from the north-west, until we come to the first formidable inroad of Mohammedan Arabs in 999 A.D. The great champions of Hinduism against Islam were the Rajputs, whose nobles still represent the highest aristocracy and the bluest blood in India. For a long time they combated desperately and with success; but in 1193 the Mohammedans captured Delhi, and within another twenty years they definitely overthrew the Rajputs and established themselves as potential masters of India. For Delhi, though the maps do not show it, is a great strategical position, marking the centre of a kind of pass, where the access to India from the north-west is narrowed to a tract, not above one hundred miles broad, between the mountains on the north and a desert on the south. Hence all the decisive battles of India against invaders from the north-west have been fought within fifty miles of Delhi.

In the fifteenth century a new set of Mohammedan invaders—the Turkis or Tartars—came down upon the Arabs, and after more than a hundred years of raiding, invaded Hindostan in good earnest under a great leader, Baber. In 1526 they became masters of Delhi. Then for two hundred years strong man succeeded strong man, and there was consolidated what is called the Mogul Empire. Akbar, one of the great men of all time, reigned from 1556 until 1605—almost exactly the period of our own Elizabeth—and gathered all India north of the Narbada, from Kandahar to the Bay of Bengal, into a single Empire. His successors strove hard, though with indifferent results, to subjugate the Dekhan; but by the middle of the seventeenth century signs of decay were evident among the Moguls. The Hindus, whether warriors as the Rajputs, or meek and submissive, as the Bengalis, have an amazing power of silently and gradually absorbing all alien races into themselves. At this moment a sharp line divides Mohammedans from Hindus; and yet the Mohammedans have already caught the system of caste from the Hindus, and as centuries roll on will doubtless be more and more drawn into the likeness of the Hindus, until the two races are indistinguishable. Intermarriage contributes greatly to this; and it was intermarriage with Hindu women, and the consequent dilution

of the stern Tartar blood, which weakened and ruined the Mogul Emperors.

The last eminent man of the line, Aurungzib, perhaps inspired by the deterioration of his countrymen, was a rabid Mohammedan fanatic, so relentless in his persecutions that he raised up a host of enemies and brought about the ruin of the Mogul Empire. The Rajputs reappeared as the champions of Hinduism, but there also came forward two new defenders. The first may be described as a Puritan sect, the Sikhs. They were at the outset only martyrs, but later, when a man of genius was born among them, they became in the nineteenth century a great military power. The second and more important were the Marathas, the followers of Sivaji Bonsla, a petty chief from the hills above Bombay, who being a fine military leader, wore out the armies of Aurungzib by what we call guerilla tactics. What the Marathas were no one can say. They were not a caste, nor a sect, nor a nation; but they were a homogeneous body, and they would, but for us English, have become the masters of India.

Our own start in India was humble; but the East India Company began in the early years of the seventeenth century to establish factories, or trading depots, at various points on the coast, including one at Madras in 1640 and on the Hugli in 1651. Bombay, which was part of the dowry of

Katharine of Bragança, was leased to the Company in 1661, and Calcutta was founded in 1690. But all the factories suffered much during the incessant fighting between Sivaji and Aurungzib; and the Company in 1686 declared its intention of making reprisals. It had already formed the nuclei of European armies in Madras in 1644 and in Bombay in 1668; and had begun to enlist native troops in 1683. But meanwhile another European power, the French, had established factories in Madras at Pondicherry and in Bengal at Chandernagore in the year 1674; and the progress of events was such as to offer great temptation to foreign adventurers. Aurungzib died in 1707, and with the passing of the last strong man the realm of the Moguls crumbled rapidly away. The viceroy of the Dekhan set himself up as an independent sovereign at Haiderabad; a Hindu dynasty was founded at Tanjore; another imperial official seized Oude; one adventurer laid hold of Bengal; another of Rohilkhand; countless soldiers of fortune planted themselves as petty chieftains in hill-fortresses; a Persian invader sacked Delhi; and an Afghan chieftain conquered the whole of the western Punjab. India had never been in a more appalling welter of confusion and chaos than in the midst of the eighteenth century.

Just at this period the English and French for

the first time came to blows in the Peninsula, the pretext being the war of the Austrian Succession. The French, represented at Pondicherry by a very able agent, Dupleix, had initiated a policy of diplomatic interference in the affairs of the neighbouring states, having an army of seven thousand Sepoys to back them. The British on the other hand stuck to their trading, and, as usual, were unprepared for any attack. The French therefore besieged and took Madras in 1746 ; but, being reinforced in time, the British in turn besieged but did not take Pondicherry. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle followed, which put an end to hostilities ; and Madras was restored to us in exchange for Louisburg. The most significant incident of the war, however, was that the Nawab of the Carnatic, the nominal suzerain of both the English and the French on the Coromandel coast, had attempted to keep the peace between them ; and that his raw levies, to the number of ten thousand, had been swept off the field in five minutes by two hundred and fifty French soldiers and thrice that number of trained Sepoys. This showed that a handful of disciplined European soldiers could suffice to rout any primitive Oriental host. Another important matter was that the operations against the French had revealed a remarkable leader in the British ranks, namely Major Stringer Lawrence, a simple man who could

hardly write his name, but a fine soldier and a judge of men. For he selected from the counting-house of the Company a young clerk named Robert Clive, took his military education in hand, and to all intents adopted him as his son.

Meanwhile the death of the Nawab of the Carnatic and of the Viceroy of the Dekhan almost simultaneously gave Dupleix an opportunity, which he did not neglect, of making French influence paramount at both Courts. The succession, as almost invariably happens in the East, was disputed; and Dupleix, by supporting in each case one candidate, saw his way to making him a puppet and himself the actual ruler. The English of course supported the rival candidates; and thus, though France and England were at peace, the representatives of both nations in India were at war as auxiliaries of native princes. Stringer Lawrence being at home on leave, English military affairs went sadly wrong; and at one moment the situation was so desperate that it was only saved by a diversion against Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, by the young but not uninstructed volunteer Clive. However in 1752 Lawrence returned, and in that and the following year he gained victory after victory over the French. The centre of the fighting, by a singular chain of accidents, was the city of Trichinopoly; and in the plain before it Lawrence, with forces ranging from

eight hundred to three thousand regular troops, two-thirds of them Sepoys, against superior numbers of French, fought a series of beautiful little actions, out-manœuvring his enemy on the open ground by what would now be called parade movements, but which were then the finest achievements of training and discipline. In 1754 Dupleix was recalled to France to answer for misconduct, and the struggle was closed by a suspension of arms. The interest of these few years, 1748 to 1754, is that, France and England being at peace, their fleets could not intervene in the contest; otherwise the power which enjoyed supremacy at sea was bound to win, being always able to bring out her own reinforcements and exclude those of the enemy. When the fight was resumed, the influence of superiority at sea was very clearly seen; but meanwhile the year 1753 had witnessed a new departure in British policy in India, namely the arrival of a king's regiment, the 39th Dorsetshire, which still bears the motto *Primus in Indis*. Henceforward the rivalry in the great peninsula was not to be between trading companies but between nations.

And now you will ask what manner of campaigns were these? I must answer that generally speaking they were extremely comfortable. The theatre of war, which extended along about two hundred miles of the east coast from Madras to the River Cavery,

and about fifty miles inland, is mostly easy country, cultivated and full of supplies, with abundance of old fortified places to serve for depots and magazines. Thus the sea could be used for the conveyance of troops and heavy stores along the coast (though the ports are unsafe during the monsoon); while inland there was abundance of native carts and of bullocks, which, though small and weakly, could travel at the rate of two miles an hour. The army was, as always in India, accompanied by a vast number of followers—in those days about ten followers to one fighting man, though the proportion has now been greatly reduced. In fact an army on the march had much the appearance of a moving city, every kind of trade, profession and calling being represented, with speculators, in particular, in great strength. On the march the officers were for the most part carried in palanquins, and they were of course attended by the full strength of their native households, with every appliance for their comfort. The men marched, the British, so far as one can gather, in full European costume and with no special protection from the sun; though it is difficult to be certain about the matter, for it is quite likely that they were equipped very much according to the notions of their officers. They too had plenty of followers to look after them. The Sepoys, so far as uniform went, were dressed in a short red jacket,

a curious semi-oriental, semi-European black head-dress, very short little white drawers barely reaching mid-thigh, and native shoes. The Madrassi is not a fighting man—indeed Lord Roberts went so far as to disband most of the true Madras infantry—and it is almost certain that the sepoys who fought with Lawrence, Clive, Coote, and Wellesley were adventurers from all parts of India, including many from the fighting races of the north. The British in column of route marched two abreast, the Sepoys three abreast, for though well disciplined their drill was primitive ; and, so far as I can gather, they knew few words of command (apart from the manual and firing exercise) except " Right turn " and " Left turn," which sufficed to bring them from line into column and from column into line, the British in two ranks, the Sepoys in three. It must be added that the Company's troops, being accustomed to march from place to place to relieve each other in various garrisons, always kept a respectable amount of transport with them, and hence could enter upon a campaign ready mobilised. But at all times the number of the followers was, and still is, a great encumbrance, and, when supplies and forage were scanty, an appalling difficulty.

So much for Madras ; but Madras was only one of three presidencies, which were practically as far from each other as England is from Portugal. From

Calcutta to Madras is a good eight hundred miles by sea; and by land the journey was almost impracticable owing to the number of great rivers that cross the line of march. From Bombay to the British settlements on the Malabar coast is another eight hundred miles by sea, and to Madras itself, going round Ceylon, over two thousand miles. From Calcutta to Bombay overland is a thousand miles as the crow flies, though part of the distance could be traversed by river, and by sea at least two thousand five hundred miles. Moreover there was until 1773 no Governor-General; but the three presidencies of Bombay, Bengal and Madras were co-equal, and divided moreover by jealousies and self-importance.

The opening of the Seven Years' War in 1756 brought about a renewal of hostilities; but it began with an unexpected disaster in the capture of Calcutta, through a sudden fit of jealousy, by Siraj-ud-Daula, the Nawab of Bengal. Upon this disaster followed the tragedy of the Black Hole. It was necessary to send troops up from Madras under Clive to recover the city with all haste, for French reinforcements were expected at Pondicherry, and there was no fleet to stop them. Having but a handful of men, Clive contrived to detach one of the Nawab's principal officers from him, and by the man's treacherous assistance defeated Siraj-ud-Daula at Plassey. This done, he installed Mir

Jaffier, the officer aforesaid, in the Nawab's place, and left a young clerk named Warren Hastings to keep him in order.

Meanwhile a very able French officer, one de Bussy, had contrived by consummate skill and daring to restore French influence with the Viceroy of the Dekhan, but, having little military force at his command, was unable to effect much, while the British themselves were too weak greatly to harm their enemies. In the spring of 1758 the French reinforcements arrived, and the commander, Count Lally Tollendal, was able to take the field with twenty-five hundred Europeans—an enormous force in those days—and half as many Sepoys. He captured several minor places in the first few months, but, finding himself short of money, turned southward to take some from the rich Rajah of Mysore. Persecuting and bullying wherever he went, he soon turned all the natives against him. All cattle were driven off, all food was hidden away ; and, when Tanjore was reached, he found himself opposed not only by natives but by part of the British garrison of Trichinopoly, which the British commandant had sent to their assistance. After heavy loss and much suffering he returned to Pondicherry, where he learned that after a sharp action the French fleet had been driven from the coast by a British fleet of inferior numbers ; and, what with one trouble and

another, it was December before he could lay siege to Madras. He stayed before the city for two months, when the appearance of the British fleet, which had been refitted after the recent engagement, compelled him to retreat. Meanwhile Clive in Bengal had detached a small force, as a diversion, by sea against the French settlements in the Northern Sirkars, about two hundred miles north of Madras; where the commander, Colonel Forde of the Thirty-ninth, fought a brilliant campaign against superior numbers, and by his success not only extinguished the French power in that quarter but banished French influence in favour of English at the court of the Viceroy of the Dekhan. The tide now turned. Fresh reinforcements arrived from England together with a new commander, Colonel Eyre Coote, to take the place of Lawrence whose health had given way. The Dutch in Batavia, always jealous of the British, fitted out an expedition to attack their rivals in Bengal while the bulk of British troops were in Madras; but it was useless. Clive detached Forde with orders to fight them immediately. Forde did so, overthrowing their superior numbers in half an hour, and capturing their army almost to a man. Three months later Coote met Lally at Wandewash upon equal terms and completely defeated him, thus destroying for ever the French competition for the mastery of India.

While the British power was thus growing, that of the Marathas had increased likewise; and they had organised themselves into a confederacy of five co-equal parts under five principal chiefs. In 1758 their success ran so high that they laid hold upon Delhi itself; but this was too much for the Mohammedan Afghans. They came down in their wrath; and in 1761 a great battle was fought at Panipat in which the Marathas were utterly defeated. Had the Afghans followed up their success, the Marathas would have taken long to recover from the blow; but the victors were obliged to look to their own western frontier which was threatened by the Persians; and the only result of the fight was to exhaust two of the possible masters of northern India and leave the country in greater confusion than ever. Most unfortunately, too, Clive, the representative of the third possible master, went home on leave at this time; and the supreme power in Bengal passed into the hands of the Company's clerks. Having no high standard before their eyes and being miserably paid, these clerks saw the chance of enriching themselves by selling the use of the Company's troops to any potentate or adventurer who might offer to buy; and, by setting up and throwing down the Nawabs of Bengal as best suited their pockets, they involved the Company in most perilous and soon disastrous

wars. From the worst of their difficulties they were extricated by the military genius of Major Thomas Adams, who though deficient alike in men, arms and supplies, contrived by three victories at Katwa, Suti and Undwa Nala in July, August and September, 1763, to maintain the terror of the British arms. But the titular Emperor of Delhi of the Mogul dynasty also entered the fray, and strove with the help of the Nawab of Oudh to re-establish his former sovereignty over Bengal; and to make matters worse at this critical moment there was a mutiny among the Sepoys of the Bengal Presidency. The mutiny, however, was sternly repressed by Major Hector Munro, who then led his army against the Emperor and utterly defeated him at Buxar on the 23rd of February, 1764. This victory opened the way to Oudh, and the British captured in succession the great cities of Allahabad and Lucknow; when at this moment Clive returned and stopped further annexation. He had no wish to have for neighbours the adventurers who had sprung up at Delhi, Agra, Bhurtpore and in Rohilkhand. He therefore restored Oudh to its Nawab, so as to keep it a buffer-state between Bengal and the rest of Hindostan.

In Madras likewise the British officials had lost their heads. They were threatened by two dangerous enemies, the Marathas, and Hyder Ali,

a Mohammedan soldier who by sheer military genius had acquired the sovereignty of Mysore, and from that base was threatening the territory alike of the Marathas, the Nizam, and the British in southern India. The British might have played off their rivals against each other, but they contrived instead to make enemies of both ; and Hyder Ali was a formidable opponent. Happily there was a British officer, Colonel Joseph Smith, who was more than his equal, and before whom Hyder trembled in the field. But the Council of Madras displaced Smith to make room for a creature of their own ; and the consequence was that in 1769 Hyder Ali advanced to within five miles of Madras itself, and forced the Council to an humiliating peace. Even so, however, though they obtained the mercy, they did not obtain the forgiveness of the ruler of Mysore.

In 1773 the British Parliament passed an Act which, among other reforms, made the Governor of Bengal the Governor-General of all three provinces, but most foolishly omitted to make him supreme in his own Council, leaving him instead at the mercy of the majority. Warren Hastings was the first Governor-General, and well for us it is that he was so ; for no smaller man would have sufficed to preserve our dominion in India against the folly and malignity of the adverse faction in his Council. He made of his own will but one war, against the

predatory Rohillas, whom he compelled to pay due obedience to their suzerain the Nawab of Oudh. This action was afterwards distorted by the malignity of his enemies into a crime. But the Government of Bombay, like those of Madras and Bengal, had through greed of territory entangled itself in a war with the Marathas; and Hastings, while utterly disapproving its policy, found it imperative to send assistance. Moreover, he had the courage to order the reinforcements to march overland from the frontier of Oudh to Bombay, a thing which hitherto had never been dreamed of; and indeed the passage of six battalions of Sepoys across Hindostan over a vast extent of territory which no Englishman knew and where no one could say whether they would be welcomed or fired upon, is a sufficiently striking episode. Unfortunately the commander allowed himself to be tempted to do a little fighting for some petty potentates on the way; and this delay caused Hastings's heroic determination to be in great measure fruitless. The Bombay Government too managed its military affairs so ill that no operations of their designing could prosper; and finally it was necessary to patch up a hasty and discreditable peace with the Marathas in the north-west in view of a far more formidable danger elsewhere.

For in 1778, as will be remembered, the French

declared war upon us in consequence of our disasters in America; and in 1780 Hyder Ali, the southern Marathas and the Nizam formed a confederacy to expel the British from India. In June of that year Hyder descended from Mysore upon Madras with ninety thousand men, including four hundred French, and fifteen thousand Sepoys trained and disciplined after the European manner. The wretched Council of Madras had nothing ready, neither men, nor stores, nor supplies; and unfortunately Hector Munro of Buxar, who held the command of such troops as there were, managed his affairs badly and divided his force. One detachment of three thousand men was cut to pieces; and matters were so serious that Hastings sent Sir Eyre Coote down to take command in the Carnatic, with every soldier that could be spared from Bengal. A superior French fleet was on the coast, and Hyder conceived the bold notion of capturing or destroying all supplies that Coote might use ashore, while the French cut off all that might arrive by sea. Happily the French admiral left the coast in the nick of time to save Coote, who averted all immediate danger by the victory of Porto Novo; but in the campaign that followed the British general was so much hampered by Hyder's light troops that he could hardly keep the field from want of transport and supplies. Another mishap then occurred; and a detachment

of a thousand British troops was surprised and cut to pieces; while a succession of naval actions left the French fleet practically supreme on the coast. Hyder Ali died early in 1782, and Eyre Coote soon followed him, but Hyder's son Tippoo was an abler man than Coote's successor. In 1783 the crisis came. A detachment of a thousand men from Bombay, which had been sent to make a diversion on the west side of Mysore, was cut off and captured by Tippoo; and a month later a formidable French force landed at Cuddalore (Gadalur) on the east coast, and fought a severe though indecisive action against the British under General Stuart. Three days later the French squadron on the coast under Admiral Suffren drove off the British ships and landed yet more reinforcements, which gave them a decided superiority over the British. The fate of British supremacy in India hung in the balance for seven anxious days, when in the nick of time news came that peace had been concluded between France and England in Europe. So nearly were all the victories of Lawrence, Clive and Eyre Coote neutralised by incompetent administration at Bombay and Madras. The one able man among Indian officials, Warren Hastings, went home to be shamefully persecuted under the form of a judicial trial by a clique of vindictive politicians. They succeeded in ruining him financially by sheer blackguardly

cunning; but they could not damage his great name, which will never be forgotten in India while British rule endures.

Parliament now amended the government of India by giving the Governor-General absolute and supreme power, and making the chief officials responsible to Parliament instead of to the Company. These were good and useful reforms; but extreme anxiety to check the levying of war for purposes of gain led English statesmen to enact further that the Governor-General should not make war at all except for defence, thus leaving to his enemies practically the undisputed power of taking the initiative in hostilities. Lord Cornwallis, a good soldier, was the first Governor-General under the new system; and Tippoo Sahib at once took advantage of it to make a raid into the Carnatic. Cornwallis accordingly took the field against him in 1791, and invaded Mysore from the east, while a detachment from Bombay invaded it from the west. The enterprise was most difficult, for it was certain that, as soon as the British arrived on the table-land of Mysore, Tippoo would draw a ring of devastation about them, destroying all food and forage. With enormous difficulty Cornwallis reached Seringapatam, Tippoo's capital city, and laid siege to it; but, strive as he would, he could not provide transport for more than twenty days' supplies, and

he could only bring forward his ammunition by paying the women and boys among the followers to carry each a cannon-shot or two. Before he reached the city nearly all of his animals were dead, and not only his guns but all the public conveyances of the army were dragged by the troops. Ultimately he was obliged to destroy the whole of his siege-train and retreat, his camp being poisoned by the bodies of starved followers and cattle, and his troops weakened by want of food. He must not be blamed. It is not easy to take an army, even without a mass of followers, for a hundred miles through a country where there is neither food nor forage.

In the next year, 1792, Cornwallis decided to try again, having meanwhile captured several strong forts which would serve him as advanced bases and magazines. The whole force from Bengal and Bombay exceeded thirty thousand men; and, as he advanced, Tippoo as usual burned the whole country on his line of march. But the previous year's operations had given Cornwallis secure bases within little more than fifty miles of Seringapatam; and four marches sufficed to bring his force before the walls. Even so, if Tippoo had left a garrison in the capital and used the rest of his force to harass the British communications from end to end, Cornwallis would have had much ado to keep his army in sufficient strength before the walls; but Tippoo

was proud of his disciplined infantry and of his fortifications, and preferred to meet the British with their weapons instead of with his own. The result was that Cornwallis stormed Seringapatam out of hand within forty-eight hours, and compelled Tippoo to sign a treaty which deprived him of half of his territory and resources.

Now came the war of the French Revolution, a war above all of French intrigues with every people, nation and language that might bear England a grudge. During the ten years which followed the peace of 1783 there had been little peril to the British in Hindostan owing to the gathering strength of the Sikhs, who in 1785 had mastered the whole of the eastern Punjab from the Jhelum to the Sutlej, where they formed at once a barrier against any invasion from the passes on the north-west, and a dam against the rising flood of the Marathas from the south. The Marathas had by this time thrown off the authority of the Peshwa, and broken up into five practically independent states; and the most powerful of their chiefs, Scindia of Gwalior, had reoccupied Delhi and Agra and had actually called upon the East India Company to pay tribute for Bengal to him, as the holder of the old Mogul capital. A contest between British and Marathas for the mastery of India was therefore certain, sooner or later; but meanwhile the various members

of the late confederacy fought indiscriminately against each other. The whole country was overrun with mercenary bands, eager to sell themselves to the highest bidder; and adventurers of all nations were to be found among them, not the least remarkable of such being an Irish sailor, who became for a time a reigning prince with an army of ten thousand men. Luckily for us these adventurers prevailed upon many of the chiefs to train their armies after the European model, which was a fatal error for them; for, choosing to fight the British with their own weapons, they were bound to deliver themselves into their enemies' hands.

Cornwallis left India in 1793, and was succeeded by Sir John Shore. This well-meaning but feeble gentleman allowed both the Marathas and Tippoo to increase their strength at the expense of the Nizam, the ally of the British, and by his weakness encouraged Tippoo to cultivate relations with the French. In 1798 he was succeeded by a very different kind of man, Lord Mornington, better known as Marquess Wellesley, who speedily made up his mind that the anarchy outside the British dominions must cease, and that to this end British authority must become paramount in India. Tippoo Sahib, being the open ally of the French, was the first enemy to be attacked; and the command of the expedition was entrusted to General Harris

with Colonel Arthur Wellesley, Mornington's younger brother, for one of his brigadiers. Harris, knowing Tippoo's trick of devastating his country before an invading army, had to think out some method of neutralising it, for his difficulties of transport and supply were frightful. In all he had 120,000 bullocks to draw supplies and stores for his army, and those bullocks must be fed, or the campaign would go for nothing. To protect them he was obliged to advance in a hollow square, two miles broad and seven miles deep, an extremely cumbersome formation; and yet his only resource was to make feints of an advance in one direction so that Tippoo should destroy the country in that quarter, and then swerve away to a district which Tippoo had spared. This device was successful. By much zig-zagging Harris reached Seringapatam in thirty-two days without mishap, and after a month's siege stormed the city for the last time. Tippoo was killed; Tanjore and the Carnatic were annexed to the British dominions; and Mysore was restored to the Hindu dynasty which had formerly ruled it. Arthur Wellesley was meanwhile left in civil and military command of the province, and during the next two years did excellent service in restoring order in southern India. In particular he took note of the superiority, for purpose of transport, of the Mysore bullocks, which can trot six miles an hour.

Mornington's next step was to endeavour to restore the authority of the Peshwa, so as to keep the Maratha chiefs from fighting with their neighbours; but two of those chiefs, Scindia and Holkar, evaded all British overtures; and accordingly an army under General Gerard Lake was sent against Scindia's dominions in the north, and another under General Arthur Wellesley against those in the south. Scindia had a vast number of guns cast under European direction, and twenty thousand infantry trained by European officers; but Wellesley had thought out the means of beating him whether he should adopt European tactics or the old guerilla warfare—always worrying and never fighting—which was traditional with the Marathas. He would make his campaign in the rainy season, and always attack the enemy when on the march and not when in position, for the Maratha chiefs had the gift of choosing very strong positions. This he could ensure by organising his transport, his supply-service and his pontoon-train to perfection. The rivers being in flood he could always cross them with his pontoons, whereas the Marathas would be stopped by them, so that he could catch his enemy wherever he liked. Moreover, since the Marathas lived on the country, whereas he carried his food with him, he could always wait until hunger drove them from any position they might

have occupied, and then follow them up. This plan seems very simple when you know it, but it needs a great general to think out the details of a campaign in this way. Matters did not turn out exactly as Wellesley had arranged; but he beat the Marathas in a first desperate action at Assaye, where only his own skill and coolness in the presence of tremendous odds saved the day; and in a second action at Argaum, which victory being crowned by the storm of the almost inaccessible fortress of Gawilghur crushed the Maratha power in the south. In the north Lake likewise stormed Aligarh, captured Agra, won one victory at Delhi, and then by a second most desperate action at Laswari broke the might of Scindia in the north. With Holkar however, who pursued guerilla tactics, Lake was less successful. Holkar almost annihilated one of his detachments under Colonel Monson, though this same Monson shortly afterwards beat him handsomely at Deig. Lake himself stormed Deig a little later, but failed with heavy loss in four several assaults upon Bhurtpore, and was obliged to abandon the attempt and take up the chase of Holkar, whom he hunted almost to the Indus before he brought him to terms after three years of hard warfare. Peace left the British in possession of Delhi and Agra with the contiguous tracts on both sides of the Jumna, the whole of the country between the Jumna and the Ganges, and

the province of Cuttack, or in other words with a continuous length of territory from Bengal north and westward to the Upper Jumna, and southward to the Presidency of Madras. Mornington further instituted the principle that native states under British influence should keep no regular troops but those hired from the Anglo-Indian Government, should refer all disputes with their neighbours to British arbitration, and should enter into no negotiations with foreign powers.

Hereby Mornington made himself the re-founder, if the phrase may be used, of our British Empire in the East; but his wars had been costly, and his temper was too imperious to commend itself either to the Directors of the East India Company or to the Board of Control which represented the Imperial Government's authority in India. He was therefore recalled, and was succeeded first by Lord Cornwallis—who died almost immediately—and then for a time by Sir George Barlow, the senior member of the Council.

Meanwhile there suddenly burst upon British India an unsuspected and appalling danger. Owing to injudicious interference by officers of the King's service who held high command in the Madras Army, regulations were introduced which ignored the caste marks of the Sepoys. Silently but effectually correspondence was established between the Company's

battalions all over the Presidency; and a general insurrection was concerted for the autumn of 1806. Favourable circumstances caused the garrison at Vellore to rise prematurely; when eighteen hundred Sepoys made a general attack upon all the Europeans in the fort, murdered several, and were within an ace of complete success. The situation was saved by Colonel Gillespie of the Nineteenth Light Dragoons, who galloped to the spot with his regiment and two guns, forced an entrance into the fort, rallied the Europeans and destroyed the mutineers almost to a man. They had already succeeded in killing and wounding over two hundred British soldiers, so no mercy was shown to them. The service rendered by Gillespie upon this occasion was beyond estimation great; and it was a matter of extreme good fortune that such a man—ready, energetic and of almost incredible courage—should have been within reach at such a crisis. But for his bravery and promptitude the entire native army of Madras might have mutinied, and the evil might have spread until it threatened the actual existence of the British in India. With her resources strained to the utmost by the struggle with Napoleon England would have found reconquest a difficult matter; and in short, but for Gillespie, the mutiny of Vellore might have altered the whole course of European as well as Indian history.

Hardly was this peril passed away, when a trouble, almost incredibly strange and formidable, followed upon it. As the Directors had complained of extravagance and expensive wars, Sir George Barlow thought fit, in a true English spirit, to cut down above all things military expenditure; and this he did mainly by reducing certain allowances to the officers of the Company's army. Now the discipline of the British officers of that army was in a very bad state. For the King's army the King himself was the fountain of honour, and rewards for good service took the form of the Royal approbation publicly signified, of titles of honour, or of the thanks of both Houses of Parliament. The Company's army (except in rare instances) received only the thanks of the Directors—a parcel of merchants in Leadenhall Street—which were naturally little valued; except so far as they were supplemented by grants of money, of which the officers, condemned to long exile in an unhealthy climate, were very justly tenacious. Hence they had instituted the practice of passing votes of appreciation and approbation of each other, which was most pernicious to discipline. This might rightly have been put down with a strong hand; but the reduction of pecuniary allowances was a real grievance; and the officers met it with a number of absurd and insubordinate resolutions. Barlow was a strong and determined man, but he

hated soldiers; and, instead of appealing to the better feelings of the officers and using tact as well as firmness, he sent spies among them, suspended them arbitrarily right and left without trial, and employed emissaries to wean the devotion of the Sepoys from their regimental officers—this last an inconceivably dangerous measure. To be brief, in 1809 he succeeded in driving the officers into open mutiny, which was not suppressed without bloodshed; and in fact the trouble was only ended by the advent of his successor, Lord Minto; the officers yielding readily to him but declining altogether to submit to Sir George Barlow. The ill-feeling bred by this mutiny lasted for thirty years, and was not without its effect upon the greater Mutiny of 1857.

To return to more general matters, the policy of the Directors in holding aloof from affairs outside their own territory produced the worst consequences.

Lord Minto, equally with Barlow, shrank from any imitation of Lord Wellesley's masterful keeping of the peace. The result was that Central India became the resort of large bands of free-booters, who ultimately rallied themselves, thirty thousand strong, under the name of Pindaris, with a single leader Amir Khan, and bade fair to destroy the Rajputs, who were our friends, altogether. The danger was the greater, inasmuch as the beaten

Maratha leaders were chafing under their defeat, and were likely to use the Pindaris as allies. Central India in fact was in a most deplorable condition, when Minto was succeeded in 1814 by Lord Moira, better known as Marquess Hastings, a very able soldier and a resolute man, who realised at once that anarchy must be stopped in Hindostan, otherwise something worse than anarchy might result from it. His first trouble was with the Nepalis or Gurkhas, who were encroaching upon British lands in Bengal and in 1814 actually seized two districts. Hastings at once resolved upon war, and sent an army to penetrate the passes into the mountains. The expedition is noteworthy, for it was the first of our many invasions into the great hill ranges which surround the north of India. The operations were not easy ; and it was necessary to invade the frontier in four different columns, varying in strength from four to eight thousand men. One of these was thrice repulsed in attacks upon a hill-fort ; and Gillespie, its commander, was killed. There were slight reverses in other parts also, for some of the British officers showed anything but ability ; but all was redeemed by the brilliant conduct of General David Ochterlony, commanding the most westerly of the four divisions, who broke through the whole of the Gurkha defences before him, and forced them in the summer of 1815 to sue for peace.

Hostilities were renewed, however, the next year, when Ochterlony, now in supreme command, by further operations drove the Gurkhas to submission. They ceded to us a long tract of the Lower Himalayas, and thus our frontier was brought up to that of the Chinese Empire. Since then there has been unbroken friendship between England and Nepal; and there are no more loyal, efficient and gallant troops in the Imperial service than the Gurkhas.

Meanwhile the situation in Central India had grown worse and worse; and the Pindaris, secretly abetted by the Maratha chiefs, made inroads upon British territory within Bengal and Madras. The Rajputs implored the help of Hastings, who in 1817 set over one hundred thousand men in motion, more than forty thousand from the Dekhan, and more than sixty thousand from Hindostan. The occasion was worthy of so large a force, for three of the Maratha chiefs, Peshwa, Holkar and Bonsla, had thrown in their lot with the Pindaris. The Marathas were speedily weakened by three defeats at Kirki, Sitabaldi and Mahidpur; and part of the armies were then turned upon the Pindaris in converging columns, so as to break them up completely. Defeat after defeat of these free-booters followed, for every man's hand was against them. For years, owing to the timidity of Minto, they had ridden roughshod over the unhappy villagers with murder,

torture and rapine, but now their time was come. This campaign is the second instance of the employment of the British cavalry in marches of astonishing length and swiftness to exterminate bands of brigands. Arthur Wellesley had set the example in 1800, and it was worthily followed now. Very soon but one formidable band of Pindaris was left under a leader named Chitu, who was hunted for days and weeks until he was driven at last into the jungle and killed by a tiger. The remnant of the Peshwa's Marathas was again defeated at Korigaon; his strongholds fell one after another; and at length in March, 1819, the war was brought to an end. The boundaries of the Maratha states were carefully defined; their predatory system was utterly abolished; and their territories were made subject to Wellesley's principle with regard to troops, disputes with neighbours and relations with foreign powers. Then for the first time for nearly two centuries there was peace in Central India.

There were now but two points of disturbance on the British frontier: in the north-west, where the genius of Ranjit Singh had united the Sikhs into a single powerful and essentially military nation by conquest; and in the north-east, where the Burmese armies had carried aggression so far as to invade border-states under British protection. The ill-deeds of these last caused Lord Amherst, the

Governor-General, to send in 1824 a formidable force of eleven thousand men against them. Few expeditions have been undertaken with more fatuous contempt of information and enquiry than this one. The army was sent by sea to Rangoon with orders to ascend the Irrawadi by water, capturing all the principal cities which lie upon its banks, and so penetrating to Ava. As the province of Pegu, in which Rangoon stands, was a comparatively recent conquest of the Burmese, it was assumed that the inhabitants would be friendly and native supplies plentiful. On the contrary the troops found Rangoon deserted, no boats, no native pilots, no supplies, and were obliged to remain in and about the city, eating such salted and preserved provisions as they had brought with them, until a fresh supply could be brought from India. This accordingly they did, only making occasional sorties to prevent the Burmese from hemming them in altogether. These were costly little operations, for the Burmese threw up stockades with astonishing skill and swiftness, and these required to be stormed. On several occasions attacks upon them were repulsed with loss. Having arrived at the beginning of the rainy season in order to have plenty of water to ascend the river, the British had to endure all the misery and unhealthiness of the rains, aggravated by bad food, with the result that sickness made havoc of the troops and

reduced their effective numbers at one moment to three thousand men. The Burmese closed in upon them in force; but in December, 1824, were driven back by a general attack upon their whole line.

When the news of the situation reached Calcutta the Government sent out two additional expeditions to invade the province of Ava overland, one from Manipur, the other from Chittagong. The first route was found impracticable, owing to the density of the forest; the second force, eleven thousand strong, advanced upon Aracan and captured it, but failed, from neglect of sound geographical information, to find a way to the army on the Irrawadi, which it had been intended to join, and remained helpless and stationary. One fourth of the men died during the rainy season of 1825, and half of the survivors were in hospital. The main army meanwhile advanced up the Irrawadi into the interior, captured Prome, and after several smart actions arrived within sixty miles of Ava, when the Burmese at the beginning of 1826 met them and made submission. Assam, Aracan and Tennasserim were ceded to the British, and thus some compensation was gained for a very costly and destructive campaign. The casual fashion in which war had been begun in a region of continuous marsh and forest at the beginning of the rainy season, when the whole country was inundated, was thoroughly

English and most condemnable. Thousands of lives were sacrificed which might have been saved, and it was fortunate that matters fell out no worse than they did. Meanwhile the eternal assault of stockades was very trying to the troops, and gave opportunities, which were abundantly taken, for brilliant displays of valour.

While this was going on, the throne of Bhurtpore became vacant through the death of the Rajah, and was usurped by a pretender. This was a direct menace to the peace of India; and Sir David Ochterlony, who was the Resident at Delhi, at once assembled a force to drive out the usurper. So little, however, did the Governor-General know his duty, that he countermanded the project and publicly censured Ochterlony in terms of extravagant harshness. The veteran General resigned, but was so much affected by Amherst's foolish policy and by the slight put upon himself that he died soon afterwards. Then of course Amherst was obliged to do at last what he should have done at first, and Sir Stapleton Cotton was sent with twenty thousand men to besiege the famous fortress which had foiled the eager impetuosity of Lake. Its strength may be imagined by the statistics that its circuit is five miles in extent, that the ditch of the citadel was fifty yards wide and fifty feet deep, and that the ramparts generally, besides being of great height and thickness, were

built of clay which refused to crumble away under the battering of round shot. A bastion was therefore undermined and blown up, and the place was stormed out of hand.

Lord Amherst was succeeded in 1828 by Lord William Bentinck, a man who, having had Macaulay to write his epitaph, enjoys a reputation far above his deserts. He was mediocre alike as soldier and statesman, and had an extraordinary knack of doing foolish things. While Governor-General his only idea was to save money for the Directors—he even tried to sell the Taj Mahal, the gem of Mohammedan architecture in India ;—but he neglected to keep the peace ; he reduced the allowances of the European officers, in direct breach of agreement ; and finally, to curry favour with the humanitarians, he, in the face of all advice from British and native soldiers, abolished the punishment of the lash in the native regiments. The mischief which he thus did was incalculable ; for he lowered the officers in the eyes of the natives, and so ruined the discipline of the Sepoys that beyond doubt he was the greatest of all contributors to the Mutiny of 1857. The Duke of Wellington, and all who knew India, were furious with him ; but being a sentimental Whig, which is synonymous with a man of good intentions and bad judgement, he found and still finds many admirers at home. Let me beg you not to be carried away by

their admiration. Bentinck certainly did some good work, but an Indian administrator who ruins the discipline of the army—and Bentinck undoubtedly did so—is not only no statesman, but a foolish and mischievous person.

Bentinck was succeeded by Lord Auckland, whose name, unfortunately for him, is bound up with the greatest of our military disasters in India. Since the fall of Napoleon Russia had steadily pursued her advance eastwards, and by 1828 had not only appropriated some of the western territory of Persia but had gained paramount influence in that country. Thus we found ourselves confronted with the probability that we should presently have an European Power of colossal strength for our neighbour; and the question was how she should be kept at arm's length. The Government resolved that a barrier must be formed in Afghanistan. That country had lately passed out of the line of the creator of the Afghan kingdom into the hands of a strong and competent usurper. Since Persia threatened to indemnify herself for the territory lost to Russia by encroachment upon Afghanistan, this usurper, Dost Mohammed, was anxious for the English alliance. Lord Auckland on the contrary preferred to support the legitimate sovereign, Shah Shuja, who was an exile in the Punjab, and decided to replace him on the throne by an armed force, on

the assumption that such an ally would be surer than Dost Mohammed. The operation was one of extreme danger, for the British and Afghan boundaries were hundreds of miles apart. Our base of operations was Scinde, a foreign state under rulers unfriendly to us; and full upon our flank, able at any moment to cut us off from India, lay the Sikhs, equally a foreign state, nominally amicable but really very jealous, and in possession of a powerful army.

A treaty was made with the Amirs of Scinde whereby we obtained the right to use the navigation of the Indus. With enormous difficulty transport and supplies were brought up to feed the armies during the march through the barren passes of Afghanistan; and, after frightful losses of animals and no small peril of starvation, some fifteen thousand men and twenty thousand followers marched by the Bolan and Khojak passes to Kandahar, opened the way from thence to the capital by the storm of Ghazni; and in August, 1839, escorted Shah Shuja into Kabul. Then the difficulties began. It was very soon evident that, without a British force, Shah Shuja's reign would be short; so one division of infantry and a little cavalry and artillery were left to occupy the country, and the rest of the army marched for India. Honours were lavished on the commanders, and everyone flattered himself that the work was done. Signs of insurrection,

however, soon showed themselves; and the British troops scattered about between Kabul, Ghazni, Kandahar and Jelalabad were incessantly employed in putting down tribal risings. By the autumn of 1840 the commander of the army of occupation was crying out for reinforcements. The winter of 1840–1 passed away fairly quietly, and not until the following November did the final insurrection at Kabul occur. The general in command there was weak and incompetent; and the whole of his division was cut to pieces. Ghazni and various small forts were captured; and, though Jelalabad and Kandahar were stoutly held, all communication with India was hopelessly cut off. It was necessary to send practically a fresh army to relieve the beleaguered garrisons; but the Indian Government was at first so panic-stricken as to lose all thought of anything but the immediate withdrawal of the army of occupation. The Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, who had succeeded Auckland, later bethought him that such a timid retreat would endanger our whole Empire in India, but had not courage to order a new advance upon Kabul. Happily the generals took the responsibility which their superiors feared to incur. They did not withdraw their armies until they had forced their way triumphantly, the one by the Khyber Pass and Jelalabad, the other from Kandahar, to Kabul. Then and not till then did they evacuate

Afghanistan, having shown that the British were still unconquerable. Even so the principle upon which the operations were conducted was open to much criticism, though everything was redeemed by the gallant behaviour of the troops.

While withdrawing from Afghanistan, however, Lord Ellenborough was anxious to retain our hold upon the lower Indus with the fort of Karachi, which had been occupied temporarily as our base for the late operations. Sir Charles Napier was therefore sent out to Scinde with a small force to press upon the Amirs a treaty to that effect. The Amirs very naturally resented the demand; whereupon Napier instantly struck the first blow. His campaign is one which every Englishman should know, and which none has any excuse for not knowing; for its history was written by William Napier. Charles Napier began by making a raid with five hundred and fifty men mounted on camels across many miles of desert to a stronghold of the Amirs, and blowing up the fort with gunpowder. On this march he carried not only provisions but water for the whole force, animals and men. Then returning to the Indus he marched south upon Hyderabad with twenty-eight hundred men; and on the 17th of March, 1843, attacked between twenty and thirty thousand of the enemy at Miani, in a strong position above the bed of a dry river. There followed one of the greatest and

most marvellous battles ever fought by the British; and at the close of three hours the enemy was hopelessly routed with a loss of five thousand men. Again the Baluchis managed to collect twenty thousand men; and Napier, having been reinforced to a strength of five thousand men, defeated them in a second action of much the same kind at Dubba; after which he with little more trouble completed the subjection of the Amirs. Scinde was then annexed; and Napier as its first Governor showed himself not less capable as an administrator than as a general.

By this time trouble had arisen in the dominions of Scindia owing to the death of the Maharaja without issue; and an armed insurrection broke out against the authority of the Regent accepted by the British Government. The matter was one which at ordinary times might have been adjusted by patience; but the attitude of the Sikhs, which I shall describe immediately, was such that there could be no trifling. The Maratha armies had been assembled, some thirty thousand strong, including between them twenty-two thousand men trained by European officers; and, with a disputed succession in train, it was impossible to say what mischief their leaders might work. Ellenborough therefore ordered a strong force to enter Scindia's dominions in two columns, and the war was ended

in one day—29th of Dec. 1843—by the simultaneous victories of Sir Hugh Gough at Maharajpore, and of General Grey at Punniar. These were the last of our battles with the Marathas. They have never to this day forgiven us for depriving them of the mastery of India; and in 1843, in consequence of our defeats in Afghanistan, they had been stirring up hostility against us in every court of the East. The double defeat therefore gave them a salutary lesson.

Lord Ellenborough was now recalled; and Sir Henry Hardinge, one of Wellington's veterans and a highly accomplished soldier, came out as Governor-General in his stead. The condition of the Punjab was most critical. Ranjit Singh, the great leader and ruler of the Sikhs, had died in 1839, leaving no strong man to succeed him. The succession was of course disputed; and a course of risings, mutinies and assassinations showed that the great Sikh state was sinking into anarchy. All power had passed into the hands of committees of regimental officers, who were in turn partly controlled by the passions of their men. The nominal ruler could think of no better resource than to turn the unruly host across the Sutlej to fight the English, for which some recent frontier disputes furnished sufficient pretext. Lord Hardinge, who had seen what was coming, was ready for them, and some

twelve thousand men under Sir Hugh Gough advanced to meet them. Sir Hugh was a very brave man but a very bad commander, who could not see a wall without dashing his head against it. In the first action, Moodkee, he hurried his troops into the fight with every disadvantage, and though victorious lost nine hundred men. In the second action three days later at Ferozeshah, he launched about sixteen thousand British and Sepoys against fifty thousand Sikhs in a very strong position, and was practically beaten at the close of the first day's fighting, though he recovered himself on the second. In this affair he threw away twenty-five hundred men; and on the night after the first engagement the British Empire in India rocked for some hours on the verge of ruin. A month later a far more telling and scientific victory was won by Sir Harry Smith with a detachment of the army at Aliwal; and then Gough made a final blundering attack upon the Sikhs in a strongly entrenched position at Sobraon, where, though the valour of his troops and the devotion of his divisional generals won a decisive victory, it was at a cost once more of nearly twenty-five hundred men.

Sobraon brought the war for the moment to a close; but the government temporarily established by us in the Punjab was weak and inefficient; and early in 1848 a general insurrection brought about

a reassembling of the Sikh army to try conclusions with the British once more. Lord Dalhousie, the new Governor-General, at once took up the challenge ; and Gough again was in command of the army. He began as usual by knocking his head against a very strong position of the Sikhs at Ramnuggar, and was repulsed. He did precisely the same thing a few weeks later at Chillianwalla, once more lost nearly twenty-five hundred men, and fought at best a drawn battle. Finally a month later he fought a third action at Gujerat on the 21st of February, 1849, showed for once (he or his officers for him) some tactical skill, and won a great and decisive victory with comparatively small loss. The Punjab was then annexed to the British dominions by Dalhousie, and the frontier thus carried to the foot of the mountains of Afghanistan. But the struggle had been very severe, for the Sikhs were most valiant men, very skilful gunners, and masters of the art of choosing strong positions, whereas Gough was a hot-headed Irishman, of splendid bravery, but wholly unfit to command anything larger than a battalion in action.

But still there was no rest for the British Army. Doubtless under the spell of our disasters in Afghanistan, the Burmese Government had been bullying and maltreating British merchants at Rangoon in violation of the treaty of 1826 ; and its only response

to Dalhousie's protests was contemptuous insult to his envoys. An expedition was therefore despatched to Rangoon in 1852, which first and last numbered some twenty thousand men; but on this occasion the campaign was properly thought out. A few towns only, which commanded the mouth of the Irrawadi, were captured so as to cut off all external trade, and within eighteen months the Court of Ava was obliged to sue for peace. The fighting was of slight importance, indeed the sharpest was against dacoits or patriot banditti, some of whom were very formidable. However, the Government at Calcutta took care to provide land-transport, in case an inland advance should be necessary, elephants in particular being employed in very large numbers. The province of Pegu was annexed to the British dominions, and thereupon followed a brief period of peace, during which Dalhousie annexed also three Maratha states, in default of direct heirs, and the Kingdom of Oudh.

It was this period of peace, signifying practically the pacification of all India, that brought about the mutiny of the Sepoys of the Bengal Army. There were various contributory causes, most notably the steady decay of its discipline, partly through the employment of the best officers in political work, and the making of political services the best channel to advancement, partly owing to the steady

discouragement of the officers in favour of the men which had marked the mistaken policy of Bentinck. The Sepoys were so continually flattered that they imagined themselves to have conquered India, whereas without European battalions an Indian army is like a spear without a point. They therefore broke out into mutiny, and for a time extinguished British rule in certain districts. Thereupon reappeared all the old animosities of past centuries, Mohammedan and Hindu fighting each other more fiercely than the English; while adventurers joyfully gathered bands of their own kind around them for the gay business of free-booting. Great part of the country settled down to a hearty enjoyment of anarchy; and nearly two years were needed to restore order. Two regiments indeed, the Central India Horse, were raised on purpose to hunt down banditti in Central India, and are still always the first troops to be sent into the field wherever there is serious police-duty to be done.

In 1858 the East India Company was swept out of existence, and the Crown took over all its forces and the entire business of administration in India. With a frontier conterminous with the highlands from which warlike tribes have from time immemorial descended to raid the plains, we have since been obliged to make endless expeditions to punish the raiders, all very difficult operations and some of

them very costly. Umbeyla, Bhotan, Beluchistan, Tirah, Chitral, Tibet are names which recall some of these campaigns; and in 1878 the exclusion of a British mission from Afghanistan while a Russian mission was received at Kabul brought on a second and serious Afghan War. As in 1838, Kabul was reached with little difficulty; and the battle only began, after peace had been made, with an insurrection in the capital. There was no such disaster as in 1841, for we captured Kabul and Kandahar at once; yet we were absolutely powerless to subdue and pacify the whole country. We suffered one serious reverse; and our difficulties would have been endless had there not been at hand a strong man whom we installed as ruler of the country, and under whose iron hand the most refractory tribesmen trembled and were still. Lastly in 1885 the Burmese having again insulted us, an expedition was sent which made its way without difficulty to Mandalay. Upper Burma was annexed to the British dominions, and there followed two weary years spent in suppressing marauding bands and free-booters. The operations of these two years have been called the subalterns' war, for they were conducted mainly by very small parties under the leadership of subalterns, who made their way with indomitable perseverance through the jungle by native paths, and, being generally at the head of

the column, were lamentably often picked off by the shot of an unseen enemy.

Altogether the exploits of the British in the conquest of India form a very remarkable story, though it is by no means unchequered by follies, failures and misconduct. We very early learned that we must never retreat before Orientals, but must always attack, no matter what the odds against us; and by following this rule we have under able commanders achieved most astonishing feats of war. In particular is the record of the British regiments remarkable. The East Indian European Army was enlisted for short service, though it contained many old soldiers in its ranks; but the British soldier of the King's regiments was enlisted for at least twenty-one years, if not for life, and his prowess is amazing. You know of course that it is rare for a battalion of any army to be fit for much, after suffering severe loss in action, until its ranks have been refilled. But the British battalions, led by Lake, Wellesley and Gough, though they rarely took the field more than six hundred strong, would lose one hundred and fifty men in a fight on Monday, two hundred more in another fight on Thursday, and over one hundred more in a third fight on Thursday fortnight. Nothing seemed to have power to stop them, at any rate in India. Time after time in the assault of hill-fortresses in the south the

Sepoys failed, and a few companies of British were brought forward to show them how to do the work. No losses seemed to daunt them. Individual men served in storming party after storming party, and would not wait to be healed of wounds received in a first assault before they volunteered to risk almost certain death in a second.

Still, as I have said, there are records of many failures and we are too fond of passing over our weak points and dwelling on the strong. In the case of the Mutiny we recall with pride the deeds of Nicholson and Havelock, and are never weary of the old stories of the siege of Delhi and the relief of Lucknow. All honour to those who quitted themselves like men; but I am afraid there are many episodes of the Mutiny which are little creditable to the British, whether civilians or soldiers. A great many individuals were found unequal to the occasion; and this is true of every war and probably of the majority of actions. There was certainly one instance of misbehaviour at Trafalgar, one ship did not respond to Nelson's famous signal; and Collingwood spoke his mind about it at the time, though few people know it. We must therefore never be satisfied with the fame of our fore-runners, and suppose that it suffices for us. Let us by all means be kindled by their example to the utmost fulfilment of our duty; but let us know also when

and where and why they failed. Let us study their defeats as well as their victories; let us ask ourselves whether some of the failings which brought about those defeats may not still be present among us. If we can truly and conscientiously say that they are not, then we may—but always with caution—presume to criticise and even to censure; always remembering that it is not enough for us to emulate the deeds of our ancestors. If we are not to fall below them, we must endeavour to surpass them, for there is no such thing as a stationary Empire.

INDEX

Abercromby, Sir Ralph, in the W. Indies, 126–7
Acre, mentioned, 43
Adams, Major Thos., in India, 164
Addington, Henry, mentioned, 86–8, 127
Afghanistan, mentioned, 163; campaigns in, 187–90, 197
Africa, South, early wars in, 131–5; Zulus in, 41; last war, 27, 45, 98, 112
Africa, West, fighting in, 143–4
Agra, capture of, 175
Aix-la-Chapelle, Peace of, 76, 155
Akbar, the Emperor, 152
Albemarle, Lord, in the W Indies, 123
Albuera, battle of, 39
Alexander the Great, mentioned, 40
Aligarh, capture of, 175
Aliwal, battle of, 193
Allahabad, capture of, 164
Alsace, mentioned, 43
America, War of Independence, 28, 80–2, 110–12, 135; the British in N., 55, 59, 76, 80, 102–5; character of settlers, 104–5, 107, 109–12; war of 1812, 113; and see under Canada
Amherst, Gen. Jeffery, in Canada, 109
Amherst, Lord, in India, 183, 185
Amir Khan, mentioned, 179
Anne, Queen, mentioned, 109
Aracan, capture of, 184
Arcot, 156
Argaum, battle of, 175
Army, the British, foreign nomenclature in, 52; reductions in, 58, 61–2, 72, 96, 134; under Ch. II, 56–7; under Will.[3] III, 59–63; under Anne, 65; under Geo. I, 72; under Geo. II, 74–9; under Geo. III, 80, 82–3; in the 19th cent., 97–8; confused organisation of, 61; ill-treatment of, 73, 83; introduction of short service, 134–5; weapons of, 48–50, 60; appreciation of officers, 144–9; early organisation of, 47–9, 54; the New Model, 54
Assam, capture of, 184
Assaye, battle of, 175
Assiento, Treaty, 117
Auckland, Lord, in India, 187
Aurungzib, the Emperor, 153–4
Austrian Succession, War of, 74, 106, 155
Ava, British at, 183–4

Badajoz, capture of, 25
Bahama Is., 80

Barbados, 116, 124
Barlow, Sir George, in India, 176 178–9
Barrington, General, in W. Indies, 123
Bentinck, Lord Wm., in India, 186–7
Bermuda, 80, 130
Bhurtpore, assaults on, 175, 185
Birkenhead, the, mentioned, 36, 46
Bismarck, 43
Blenheim, battle of, 68
Blues, Regt. of, their origin, 56
Bombay, mentioned, 56, 153, 166, 168
Bonsla, mentioned, 181
Braddock, General, in N. America, 107–9
Burgoyne, General, in N. America, 110–11
Burke, Edmund, 80
Burma, campaigns in, 182–5, 194–5, 197 ; annexed, 197
Bussy, de, in India, 161
Buxar, battle of, 164

Caesar, Julius, 40
Calais, 47
Calcutta, 154, 160
Canada, French in, 102 ; fighting in, 104–5, 109 ; American invasion of, 110, 113, 137 ; and see America
Capetown, capture of, 131
Caribs, the, fighting with, 117–8
Carnot, mentioned, 40
Carthagena, expedition to, 121–2
Castlereagh, Lord, at the War Office, 88
Chaka, king of Zulus, 41
Chandernagore, 154
Charles II, mentioned, 56, 117
Charles of Bourbon, 24
Charles Ed. Stuart, in Scotland, 74–6
Chillianwalla, action at, 194
Chitu, 182
Clive, Robert, in India, 156, 159, 160–4
Coldstream Guards, origin of, 56
Colonies, character of campaigns in, 99–102
Commerce, in war, 1–3 ; its cruelty, 16–18
Condé, Prince of, 65
Continental System, the, 2
Coomassie, British at, 143
Coote, Sir Eyre, in India, 159, 162, 167–8
Cornwallis, Lord, in India, 169–172, 176
Cotton, Sir Stapleton, in India, 185
Crimea, war of, 97
Cromwell, O., mentioned, 3, 22, 58 ; reforms of, 53–4 ; expedition to the W. Indies, 119–20
Cuba, mentioned, 115–6, 123, 130
Cuddalore, action at, 168
Culloden, battle of, 75

Dalhousie, Lord, in India, 194–5
Danube R., campaign on, 67
David, king of Israel, 44
Deig, battle of, 175
Delhi, mentioned, 43, 151–2, 171, 175, 199
Dettingen, battle of, 74
Dost Mohammed, 187–8
Dubba, action at, 191
Dupleix, Joseph, in India, 155–7

East India Co., its troops, 57, 83, 154, 178, 186, 198 ; mentioned, 153, 171, 176, 196

Edward III, 48
Egypt, mentioned, 51, 86
Elizabeth, Queen, mentioned, 47, 52
Ellenborough, Lord, in India, 189–92
England, military backwardness, 48; growth of empire, 55–6, 58, 77; position in 1660, 55; projected invasion of, 86

Ferdinand of Brunswick, 77
Ferozeshah, battle of, 193
Flanders, wars in, 60, 63, 65, 75; and see Netherlands
Fontenoy, battle of, 74
Forde, Col., 162
France, the Revolutionary War, 23–4, 27, 38, 41–2, 83–4; her colonies, 56, 58, 76–7, 102–4, 107, 123–4, 128; French in India, 154–62; our connection with, 47, 55; as ally of America, 112–3; aids the Stuarts, 75
Franklin, Benjamin, 109
Frederick the Great, mentioned, 41–2, 77
Frederick, Duke of York, 85

Gawilghur, capture of, 175
Geete R., 68
George I, 72
Germany, mercenaries in British pay, 75–7, 81–2; mentioned, 25, 32, 74, 77
Ghurkha war, 180
Ghazni, 188–9
Gibraltar, mentioned, 65, 72–3, 80–1
Gideon, his tactics, 44–5
Gillespie, Col. Rollo, in India, 177, 180
Goliath, 44
Goree, 82
Gough, Sir Hugh, in India, 192–4, 198
Grenada, 126
Grey, General W., in the W. Indies, 125–6; General H., in India, 192
Guadeloupe, mentioned, 123, 126, 128
Guiana, Dutch, capture of, 127
Gujerat, action at, 194
Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, his military reforms, 53

Haiti, mentioned, 120, 124, 126
Halifax, British at, 107
Hannibal, 38
Hardinge, Sir Henry, in India, 192–3
Harris, General, in India, 173
Hastings, Warren, in India, 161, 165–9
Hastings, Marquis of, in India, 180–1
Havana, siege of, 123; mentioned, 77
Henry V, mentioned, 48, 54
History, Military, definition of, 1–14, 45; use of, 19–22, 29, 39, 43
Holkar, mentioned, 174–5, 181
Holland, soldiers of, 52, 60; commerce of, 18, 55; wars in, 64, 67, 84, 86; colonies of, 102–3, 162
Howe, General, 111
Hyder Ali, mentioned, 164–5, 167–8

India, mentioned, 43, 57, 77; military history of, 150–200; adventurers in, 154, 171, 179, 196; campaigning in, 157–8;

the presidencies, 160; administrative reforms in, 165, 169, 176, 196; the Mutiny, 195–6, 199
Indies, the West, British in, 55, 72, 77, 80, 84–5; character of country, 114–6, 118; ruin of, 128–9; Cromwell's expedition to, 119–20; later expeditions, 120–2, 124–8; the French in, 116, 123, 128
Inkermann, 51
Ireland, mentioned, 54, 59, 61, 64–5, 72
Italy, the French in, 86

Jamaica, mentioned, 115–6; capture of, 120
James II, mentioned, 57–59, 64–5
Japan, mentioned, 28, 52
Jelalabad, mentioned, 189
Jesuits, the, as colonists, 35, 103

Kabul, British at, 188–9, 197
Kaffir wars, 133–4
Kandahar, British at, 188–9, 197
Karachi, 190
Katharine of Bragança, mentioned, 56, 154
Katwa, battle of, 164
Kirkee, battle of, 181
Korigaon, battle of, 182

La Bassée, 68
Lake, General Gerard, in India, 174–5, 185, 198
Lally Tollendal, count, in India, 161–2
Laswari, battle of, 175
Latimer, Hugh, 48
Lawrence, Major Stringer, in India, 155–6, 162
Lee, Robert, 4
Lisbon, Wellesley at, 90–1
Lorraine, mentioned, 43
Louis XIV, mentioned, 63–5, 71, 104
Louisburg, French at, 106–7; capture of, 109, 155
Lucknow, 164, 199
Luther, Martin, 40
Luxemburg, Francis Henry, Duke of, 65
Lycurgus, 41

Madras, French at, 155; mutiny in, 176–8; bad administration, 164–5, 167–8; mentioned, 107, 130, 153
Maharajpore, battle of, 192
Mahidpur, battle of, 181
Mandalay, British at, 197
Manila, 77
Maoris, the, wars with, 101, 138–43
Marathas, the, their origin, 153; their growth, 163, 171; British wars with, 166, 174–5, 181, 191–2; mentioned, 195
Marengo, battle of, 86
Maria Theresa, the Empress, 74
Marlborough, John, Duke of, appreciation of, 65–71; mentioned, 94–5
Martinique, mentioned, 116, 123–5, 128
Miani, battle of, 190–1
Militia, the, Pitt's Bill, 78; as recruiting-ground, 85, 88; under Addington, 87; the Local, 89; mentioned, 72, 83, 85, 89
Minden, battle of, 77
Minorca, mentioned, 72, 76, 80–2
Minto, Gilbert, 1st Earl of, in India, 178–81

Mir Jaffier, 160–1
Mogul Empire, 152–4
Moltke, General, 43
Monk, George, 56, 100
Monmouth, James, Duke of, 57
Monson, Colonel, in India, 175
Montecuculi, Raimondo, Conte de, 65
Moodkee, battle of, 193
Mornington, Lord, see under Wellesley, Marquis of
Moses, mentioned, 40
Munro, Major Hector, in India, 164, 167
Mutiny Act, 60
Mysore, fighting in, 165, 167, 169, 173

Napier, Sir Charles, in Scinde, 190–1
Napoleon, mentioned, 1, 12, 24, 41–2, 86, 89, 94, 187
Navy, the British, mutiny in, 85; in war of 1812, 113–4
Nepal, fighting in, 180–1
Netherlands, the Austrian, fighting in, 66, 74
Newfoundland, 72–3
New York, settlers of, 104–5; mentioned, 57, 102–3, 110
New Zealand, war in, 137–43
Nizam, the, mentioned, 165, 167, 172
Nova Scotia, mentioned, 72–3, 106

Ochterlony, Sir David, in India, 180–1, 185
Omdurman, battle of, 22
Oudenarde, battle of, 68
Oudh, annexation of, 195

Panipat, battle of, 163
Pegu, annexation of, 195
Peninsular War, the, mentioned, 42; summary of, 89–95
Pennsylvania, Quakers in, 11–12
Persia, 187
Peshwa, 181–2
Philadelphia, capture of, 111
Pindaris, the, fighting with, 179–82
Pitt, Earl of Chatham, William, war policy, 76–80; mentioned, 108, 122
Pitt, William, military policy, 83–8; W. Indian policy, 125–8
Plassey, battle of, 160
Police, the, connection with Army, 9, 54, 56, 72
Pompadour, Mme de, 4
Pondicherry, French at, 154–5, 160–1
Porto Novo, battle of, 167
Porto Rico, mentioned, 115–6, 127
Portugal, British in, 90–1; mentioned, 42
Prome, capture of, 184
Punjab, the, annexation of, 194
Punniar, battle of, 192

Quebec, mentioned, 102, 105, 109

Ramillies, battle of, 68
Ramnuggar, action at, 194
Rangoon, British at, 183, 195
Ranjit Singh, mentioned, 182, 192
Reunion, Is. of, 36
Roberts, F.M., Earl, mentioned, 159
Rohilla War, 166
Rome, sack of, 24–5
Russia, mentioned, 28, 51–2, 187

St Domingo, mentioned, 115–6; expedition to, 119–20
St Kitts, 57
St Lawrence R., French colonies on, 102–3; expedition to, 106
St Lucia, mentioned, 82, 123, 126–7
St Thomas, 115
St Vincent, fighting in, 117, 126
St Vincent, John Jervis, Earl, in the W. Indies, 125
Saratoga, defeat at, 112
Saul, King of Israel, 25
Schellenberg, battle of the, 68
Scinde, operations in, 188, 190–1
Scindia, mentioned, 171, 174–5, 191
Scotland, rebellion in, 72, 74–6
Senegal, 82
Seringapatam, sieges of, 26, 169–71, 173
Shah Shuja, 187–8
Shakespeare, William, 52
Shelley, P. B., mentioned, 33
Shore, Sir John, in India, 172
Sikhs, the, their growth, 171, 182, 188; war with, 191–4
Simonstown, 131
Siraj-ud-Daula, 160
Sitabaldi, battle of, 181
Sivaji Bonsla, mentioned, 153–4
Smith, Sir Harry, in S. Africa, 133; in India, 193
Smith, Col. Joseph, in India, 165
Smollett, Tobias, 122
Sobraon, battle of, 193
Spain, her wars, 8, 23, 25, 52, 82; colonies, 116, 120; mentioned, 63, 73, 89, 102
Spanish Succession, War of the, 64–8
Sparta, 41
Stirling, mentioned, 43, 75
Strategy, definition of, 42–3
Stuart, General James, 168
Suffren, Admiral, 168
Suti, battle of, 164
Swiss, the, as soldiers, 50

Tactics, definition of, 43–4; changes in, 47–50, 60
Talents, Ministry of All the, 88
Tangier, mentioned, 56–7, 65
Tennasserim, capture of, 184
Tippoo Sahib, mentioned, 168–73
Tobago, mentioned, 82, 127
Tournay, fighting at, 68
Trafalgar, 199
Trichinopoly, fighting at, 156, 161
Trinidad, 115, 127
Tugela R., fighting on the, 134

Undwa Nala, battle of, 164
Utrecht, Peace of, 71, 106

Vellore, mutiny at, 176–7
Vendôme, Louis Joseph, Duke of, mentioned, 68
Vienna, mentioned, 67
Virginia, 57
Volunteers, the, under Addington, 87–8

Walpole, Sir Robert, 72
Wandewash, battle of, 162
Warburg, battle of, 77
Warren Hastings, the troop-ship, 36–7
Washington, George, 4, 107
Waterloo, battle of, 79, 95
Wellesley, Richard, Marquis, in India, 172, 174, 176, 179

Wellington, Arthur, Duke of, character of, 95–6; in India, 173–5; his scheme for the Peninsular War, 90–5; mentioned, 25, 41–2, 68, 159, 182, 186, 198
William III, the army under, 59; W. Indian expedition, 120
William, Duke of Cumberland, mentioned, 74–5
Wolfe, General James, mentioned, 109

Xavier, François, mentioned, 40

York, Frederick, Duke of, 85

Zizka, John, mentioned, 52
Zulus, the, wars with, 134–5

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